

CHEROKEE NATION AND TAR CREEK

ABIGAIL ESTES

THE CHEROKEE NATION

- Original homeland is southeastern United States (what is now Georgia)
- Sequoyah's syllabary - 1821
- Trail of Tears - 1838
- Tahlequah, OK is new Cherokee capital
- 7,000 sq. mile jurisdictional service area (not a reservation)



- The Origin of Strawberries

TAR CREEK

- **History**
- **Contamination of Environment**
- **Affect on Community**
- **Lead and Children**
- **Lead in the Ukraine**

Tar Creek - History

The 40 square mile Tar Creek Superfund Site in northeastern Oklahoma is part of the 1,188 square mile historic zinc and lead mines known as the Tri-State Mining District in Missouri, Kansas, and Oklahoma. The district's historic lead and zinc production ranks as one of the highest in the world, with total ore production estimated to have been slightly more than 0.5 billion short tons, with production high during World War II. Mining began in the early 1900's and continued until the 1960's. The by-products of the mining operation were highly acidic mine water and large amounts of discarded mine and mill tailings, discarded in chat piles or settling ponds. The principle pollutants are lead, cadmium, and zinc, and chat was freely used and placed throughout the area by individuals and municipal and county agencies. There are approximately 30,000 people residing in the area, and most of the land on the Tar Creek site is allotted Indian Land. It has been a superfund site since September 8, 1983.

TAR CREEK – CONTAMINATION OF ENVIRONMENT

The beaver fled and the acid killed the fish.

John Mott watched them die. A disabled retired tire maker who had worked at B.F. Goodrich plant in nearby Miami, Okla., Mott, 55, is a bow hunter and fisherman.

"We had quite a bit of rain, and water was running down this road right adjacent to Tar Creek, and there were fish in the ruts in the road trying to get away," Mott said. "The perch and small bass and sunfish and bluegill were already dead. But the bullhead catfish, they're pretty tough. They had open sores, like somebody took a knife and cut a chunk out of them. But they were still alive. They had acid in their gills, and it wouldn't let their gills get oxygen. They were gasping for air."

AFFECT ON COMMUNITY

- In 2003, residents of the Tar Creek Superfund Site were found to be more likely to have Parkinson's disease, heart disease, high blood pressure, cancer, diabetes, and kidney disease than elsewhere in the U.S.
- "It gets in your teeth," says Sparkman, head of a local citizens' group. "It cakes in your ears and hair. It's like we've been environmentally raped."
- Government relocation of 52 families with young children in 2005.
- Federal and state officials on May 4, 2006 unveiled a voluntary buyout plan, with a budget of \$20 million for all families living in the most affected area of the Tar Creek Superfund site.

LEAD AND CHILDREN

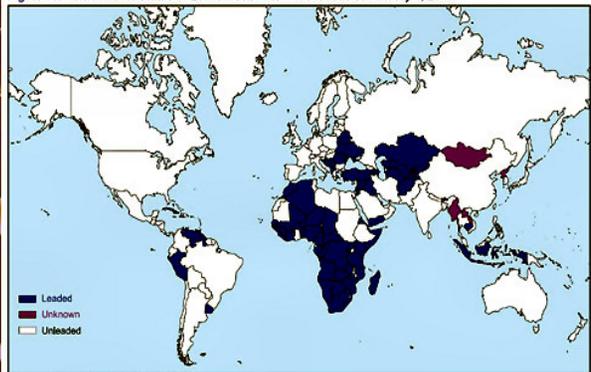
- Children are particularly vulnerable to the effects of lead.
- 35% of children aged 1-5 living in the site in 1996 had blood-lead levels above Federal Standards.
- That exposure can cause permanent neurological damage and learning disabilities.
- The local miscarriage incidence rate is 24%--the national average is 10%.
- "Lead heads" or "chat rats," are what the children of Tar Creek are called.
- As toddlers, they played in sandboxes of chat – the powdery output of mills after ore is extracted from rock. As preteens, they rode their bikes across the gravel mounds and swam in lime-green sinkholes. Their parents used mine tailings to make driveways and foundations, never thinking that contaminated dust might blow through the heating ducts of their ranch houses.



LEAD IN THE UKRAINE

- Leaded gasoline is still being sold in the Ukraine.
- Lead crystal (can leach lead after long content with acidic beverages)
- Lead wheel weights on cars have been phased out in Europe and in the process of being phased out in the USA.

Figure 75. International Status of Leaded Gasoline Phaseout as of January 1, 2004



Source: International Fuel Quality Center.





















T.R. CK









**DON'T PUT LEAD
IN YOUR HEAD.**



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