

Chemical cleanup continues in Cheyenne

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CHEYENNE -- Progress is being made in removing aircraft cleaning chemicals that seeped into groundwater under homes north of the Wyoming Air National Guard facility at the Cheyenne Regional Airport, officials say.

"We are trying different technologies and techniques to see what works best," said Anthony Griego, senior project engineer for Scottsdale, Ariz.-based ERM-West Inc.

One of those methods involves organisms that eat chemicals. Another involves shaking the ground under the surface to move groundwater through filters to remove the chemicals.

Officials said small quantities of two chemicals -- trichloroethylene and carbon tetrachloride -- used to clean aircraft parts have entered the groundwater.

Jane Francis, a geological supervisor with the state Department of Environmental Quality's Water Quality Division, is overseeing the state's interests in the cleanup of the plume of chemicals that is under about 70 lots.

The cleanup "will take years," she said.

Francis said the levels of the chemicals are fairly low, though in excess of drinking water standards.

Nearly all the residents in the Mylar Park neighborhood use treated city water, while the National Guard is supplying bottled water to the one person using well water.

Mike O'Keefe, a senior geologist with ERM, said workers are using a process to push pressurized fluid underground to loosen rock and soil, treating 3 million gallons of water since January.

"It is going really well," said Al Young, co-chairman representing the community on the Restoration Advisory Board. "They are doing a good job."