

# Sewer treatment plant planned for Anzon site

SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

A large portion of contaminated soil located at the former Anzon site, an old antimony smelter near residential neighborhoods in North Laredo, has been cleaned and is one step closer to being redeveloped into a sewer treatment plant, Congressman Henry Cuellar announced this week.

According to the Agency for Toxic Substances &



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Disease Registry, a federal public health agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, antimony is a silvery white metal that can be harmful to human health if released into the atmosphere or water supply during the

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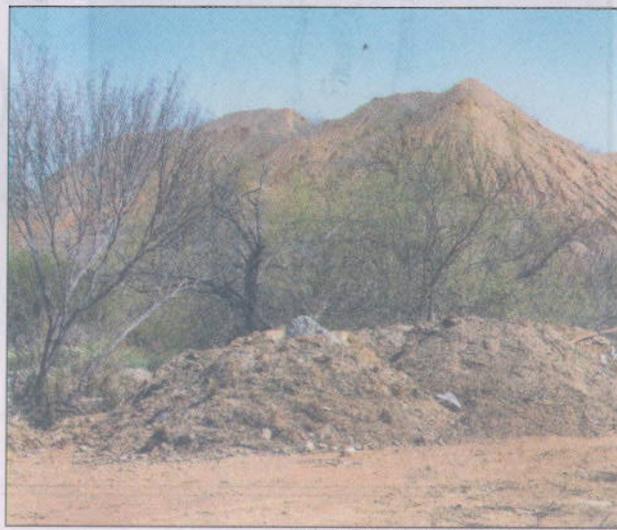


Photo by Cuata Santos/file | Laredo Morning Times

In this Feb. 19, 2014, file photo, mounds of contaminated dirt can be seen from the south entrance to the former Anzon site off Mines Road.

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mining and processing of its ores and in the production of antimony products.

At one time the largest antimony smelter in the world, the former Anzon site was originally located in Mexico and moved to Laredo in response to a duty placed on foreign antimony in the 1920s.

Anzon, now known as AI Divestitures Inc., operated the approximately 130-acre site, which sits at the intersection of Mines Road and Interstate 35 (bisected by Manadas Creek), until it ceased operations of an antimony processing facility in 1999. In 2004, the facility was demolished; however, part of the site was contaminated with antimony. Five to 6 acres out of the 71 acres north of Manadas Creek were used by Anzon, and the rest of the property had no contamination.

Last month, AI Divestitures submitted a report to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality detailing its success in removing antimony from the surface soil on the northern portion of the site.

Recently, that report was approved by TCEQ and a determination of no further action was made. Now AI can pro-

ceed with the sale of the site to the City of Laredo for redevelopment as a sewer treatment plant.

"I have worked with the EPA, TCEQ and key stakeholders for year to make sure this site was cleaned up," Cuellar said. "I'm happy to learn now that it can be redeveloped for a better purpose for our community."

"AI Divestitures Inc. is very pleased that the (TCEQ) on August 20, 2015 confirmed that 71 acres of AI's property north of Manadas Creek has been remediated to meet residential standards," said Jamie Kalanta, who has been overseeing this project as vice president of Alent D.O.G.

According to local officials, the city has reached the final stage of authorizing the purchase of the northern portion and will finalize it soon.

Under a 1995 order, AI is required to investigate and remediate the site in accordance with TCEQ cleanup rules. Aside from the recently approved 71 acres, action is also being taken on the southern portion of the site, where AI is currently finalizing bids for further development.