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# Mine Near Glendale Called Health Hazard

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Douglas County has declared a health hazard at a Glendale-area mine that emptied cyanide into Riddle's water supply. But the water is safe, according to authorities.

Samples from a leach bed at the Victory gold mine, on Cow Creek eight miles west of Glendale, indicated a cyanide concentration 22 parts above the federal hazard level of 100 parts per million, according to Gary Grimes of the state Department of Environmental Quality.

Grimes said the chemical probably was used at the mine, now idle, in 1980.

When the cyanide entered Cow Creek, the water was acid enough to vaporize it, according to John Graham, Douglas County sanitarian.

Grimes said the county has built berms around the leach bed and it poses no further danger to water supplies.

Authorities discovered the problem last spring, when miners downstream from the mine reported that rashes developed on their hands and arms, and that their brown boots turned white, Graham said.

"They knew of an operation that was going on, and DEQ did not have

a permit for them," Graham said. "So we went down to look at it and that's when we found the mine. Nobody was there operating it. It had closed up."

Though the leach bed has been declared a health hazard, Grimes said the mine could be reopened.

The DEQ is trying to contact the mine's owners, who could be billed for the cost of eliminating the cyanide threat, he said.

Grimes said there is little chance of finding the people who actually were operating the mine and left the poisonous waste there.