



[« back to home](#)

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News Sections (Archive)

- [Business Directory](#)
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- [Movies](#)
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- [Features](#)
- [Travel](#)
- [Business](#)
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- [Galleries](#)
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Opinion | 24 October, 2006 [18:07]

Doe Run response to our "La Oroya" article

(LIP-wb) -- After we published our article "World's worst polluted places - La Oroya is among them" on October 19, 2006, we received a comment from Barb Shepard, Vice President, Human Resources and Community Relations of the the Doe Run Company.

We at "LivinginPeru" are always anxious to show both sides of the coin, so we thought we should pass this information along in a separate article:

Dear Editor:

Thank you for covering news about The Doe Run Company's subsidiary operations abroad. We appreciate your interest in learning more and we welcome the opportunity to provide additional, yet often overlooked, information about our facility in La Oroya, Peru. We hope the following will help in clarifying some of the claims in the Blacksmith Institute's report. In addition, we've added you to our regular distribution list for company news.

The Doe Run Company has always been committed to the safety and welfare of our employees, their families, and the local community. Since purchasing the La Oroya facility in 1997, we have made significant progress in improving the quality of life for the people of La Oroya. To date:

- We have already reduced lead emissions by almost a third since our arrival. By the end of 2006, we expect to bring lead emissions to within Peruvian environmental guidelines.
- More than \$100 million has been invested to correct the decades of unchecked pollution Doe Run Peru inherited from the Peruvian government and prior owners.
- Since 1997, we have seen worker blood lead levels decrease by 30 percent, a testament to safety practices, facility upgrades and hygiene programs.
- More than \$500,000 in financial and additional support has been provided annually for measures to more effectively control blood lead levels such as medical facilities, blood testing materials, and in-home education for families on diet, nutrition, and hygiene – all of which are important in reducing blood lead levels.

Doe Run Peru received a three-year extension of the PAMA (the operating agreement set forth by the Peruvian government to upgrade the facility) for one of the nine PAMA projects in La Oroya--we are on track to complete the other eight on time. The remaining project, a sulfuric acid plant, is already underway. This reprioritization of projects was done so that Doe Run Peru could better address the more pressing need, lead emissions.

In addition to ensuring the health and safety of the community, Doe Run Peru is working with government officials, national and international organizations, and universities to build a strong economic and social foundation for La Oroya. We have made significant contributions to community programs, including:

1. BREAKING NEWS! (11)
2. Top (206)
3. Peru (1490)
4. Lima (582)
5. Latin America (130)
6. World (166)
7. Politics (631)
8. Elections 2006 (172)
9. Economy (469)
10. Business (277)
11. Sports (317)
12. Law and Order (482)
13. Health (177)
14. Travel and Tourism (223)
15. Art/Culture/History (111)
16. Education (80)
17. Environment/Nature (100)
18. TV/Entertainment (179)
19. Tech / Internet (66)
20. Press Releases (115)
21. Dossiers (1)
22. Opinion (9)
23. Kids (14)
24. Photo of the day (280)
25. Advice (12)
26. Announcements (23)
27. Mining/Energy (229)
28. Agriculture (30)
29. Transportation (145)
30. Natural Disasters (118)
31. Communications (14)
32. APEC PERU 2008 (118)
33. EU-LAC Peru 2008 (70)



- vocational training for women
- the refurbishment of local schools
- the reforestation of public spaces; and
- the establishment of public parks, bathrooms, and laundry facilities.

Currently, Doe Run Peru is working with the National University of the Center of Peru to support sustainable economic development programs in 13 communities in the Yauli-La Oroya Province, and with the Universidad del Pacifico and the Wharton School to improve the productivity of local silver artisans. The company intends to stay in Peru and to continue building a business that gives important support to a vibrant community.

The Doe Run Company remains committed to meeting our environmental obligations and minimizing the impact of our operations; however, we recognize it requires the efforts of others to resolve all of the issues in the community. Doe Run Peru will continue to work with the government to address the people's needs and welcomes the participation of those interested in bringing constructive solutions to the people of La Oroya.

Again, we thank you for your interest in Doe Run Peru as we continue our progress there.

Sincerely,

Barb Shepard
 Vice President, Human Resources and Community Relations
 The Doe Run Company

P.S. We invite you to visit our Viewpoints page at www.doerun.com/news/viewpoints.aspx, which contains some outside perspectives on the progress that has been made.

- related articles -

- [World's worst polluted places - La Oroya is among them](#) (LIP, Oct. 15, 2006)

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1 Comment

[Hunter Farrell](#) says :
 27 October, 2006 [17:38]

Dear Sir/Madam,

After reading the below-linked article, published this week in Mother Jones magazine, I re-read Barbara Shepard's letter, which LivinginPeru.com printed in full.

I thought you might appreciate an impartial perspective on the health crisis in La Oroya.

http://www.motherjones.com/news/feature/2006/11/lead_astray.html

Sincerely,

Hunter Farrell
 Movement for Health of La Oroya (MOSAO)

Add your comment

Name

34. [Science](#) (3)

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 The promotion and purchase, globally, of sustainably and traditionally harvested products such as me ...

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christine schmidt says :
 27 August, 2008 13:55:22
 High Bob - I must have got the point quit well and must be really good here because you have n ...

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Fernando says :
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Splaktar says :
 27 August, 2008 10:36:39
 Yep, the more people that Humala can keep poor and unhappy the better his chances are for election.& ...

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jcwong says :
 27 August, 2008 10:27:57
 really miriam, you sound like an angry chilean!please go away

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