
Press and Publicity Report

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Pueblo Library receives \$500,000 to buy internet-accessible devices

They're buying 500 laptops, 100 iPads, and nearly 300 mobile hotspots



By: [Devan Kutz](#)
Posted at 6:15 PM, Feb 01, 2023
and last updated 2023-02-01 21:04:05-05

PUEBLO — The Pueblo City-County Library just received a \$500,000 grant from the federal government to expand internet access across the city. That means they pur-

chased 500 laptops, 100 iPads, and nearly 300 mobile hotspots. Library cardholders can walk in and check them out for up to one year.

"The good news about that is it serves Pueblo, pueblo's needs, we know that Pueblo's not as connected as some cities in Colorado," says Executive Director Sherri Baca.

According to Broadbandnow.com, there are 2,000 houses in Pueblo without access to wired internet, and 11,000 houses don't have access to wired internet that's at least 25Mbps.

Baca says that having internet access is indispensable in our modern-day life. It can help people pay bills, learn new things, find a job, improve their skills, find entertainment, and countless other uses.

"The public library provides access to information which I've spent many years working in the human services realm, and I believe that

information access is a human right, everyone deserves the opportunity to connect into digital resources," says Baca.

Jasmine Saxon and Jessica Ericsson are the owners of Community Connections LLC, a small business in the archeology field hoping to discover new things in Colorado. For them, going out to the dig sites can be difficult for processing their research.

"We've definitely had to, I know I have, had to go to the tiny little library in this mountain town, and hopefully the coffee shop is open," said Ericsson.

"We go out and record everything, and we have to come back and that's why we're here in the library today to do that research," continued Saxon.

The two plan on utilizing the mobile hotspots to help with their time in the field.

"I think it would take out those steps all the time and just really allow us to have a holistic research process out in the field, which would be fabulous," says Saxon.

If you'd like to register to become a Pueblo Library cardholder, you can visit their website [here](#).

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(PUEBLO, Colo.) — The Pueblo City-County Library District (PCCLD) has received nearly \$500,000 to expand internet access in Pueblo County, and said it is launching a wireless device library.

According to PCCLD, thanks to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF), the library district purchased more than 885 Wi-Fi connected devices, expanding the district's digital resource collection by nearly 700 percent. Library patrons can check out an internet connected device from the newly created Device Library for up to four months.

The recently purchased items include:

- 500 Chromebooks with built-in Wi-Fi connectivity
- 200 Verizon Wi-Fi hotspots
- 85 T-Mobile Wi-Fi hotspots
- 100 iPads

PCCLD said prior to the ECF, there were 95 Wi-Fi hotspots, 12 Chromebooks and eight tablets in circulation between the district's eight locations. In addition wireless devices, each library location offers free Wi-Fi as well as desktop computers.

"We are extremely proud to bring this size of a broadband connectivity grant to the Pueblo community," said Sherri Baca, PCCLD executive director. "This Emergency Connectivity Fund award strengthens the library's commitment to providing internet access and electronic devices

— an effort which reached its height during the COVID-19 health pandemic and has continued since. It is our goal to serve students and anyone who wouldn't have connectivity otherwise." PCCLD said patrons can check out an internet-connected device from any library location with a valid library card or school issued K-12 ConnectED library card.

PCCLD said the ECF is a \$7.171 billion program that provides schools and libraries the funds to purchase digital devices needed for remote learning. The fund provides relief to millions of students, school staff and library patrons and helps to close the homework gap for students who lack Internet access or devices needed to connect to virtual learning classrooms. Congress authorized the ECF as part of the American Rescue Plan of 2021. The district said it plans to continue growing its digital collection once the ECF monies are spent by joining with community partners to aid in the purchase of new devices.

During the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the district purchased more than 250 Chromebooks thanks to a grant from the Sperry S. and Ella Graber Packard Fund for Colorado. Eligible students in Pueblo County received the devices in order to help them shift to an online learning environment. More than 100 Wi-Fi hotspots were also purchased and given to families of students without home internet.

Top Stories

By KRDO News

Published February 1, 2023 10:33 AM



Pueblo City-County Library District receives nearly \$500K to expand internet access



PCCLD

PUEBLO, Colo. (KRDO) -- The Pueblo City-County Library District (PCCLD) received nearly \$500,000 to expand internet access in the county.

According to library officials, the PCCLD received the money from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) [Emergency Connectivity Fund \(ECF\)](#). Thanks to the funds, the library district purchased more than 885 Wi-Fi-connected devices, expanding the district's digital resource collection by nearly 700%.

"We are extremely proud to bring this size of a broadband connectivity grant to the Pueblo community. This Emergency Connectivity Fund award strengthens the library's commitment to providing internet access and electronic devices — an effort which reached its height during the COVID-19 health pandemic and has continued since. It is our goal to serve students and anyone who wouldn't have connectivity otherwise," Sherri Baca, PCCLD executive director said.

The library was able to purchase:

- 500 Chromebooks with built-in Wi-Fi connectivity
- 200 Verizon Wi-Fi hotspots
- 85 T-Mobile Wi-Fi hotspots
- 100 iPads

Library patrons can check out internet-connected devices from the Device Library for up to four months. Patrons can check out an internet-connected device from any library location with a valid PCCLD library card or school-issued K-12 ConnectED library card.

For more information on the [PCCLD](#), [click here](#).

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ENTERTAINMENT

Have your cake and eat it, too: Here are 13 things to do in Pueblo Feb. 3-16



Tracy Harmon The Pueblo Chieftain

Published 4:45 p.m. MT Feb. 2, 2023

Tuesday, Feb. 7

Josephine Baker Chautauqua at Pueblo Community College

Hoag Theater 900 W. Orman Ave. | 6 p.m. | Actor/scholar **Becky Stone** will portray **Josephine Baker**, who was a world-renowned performer, World War II spy and civil rights activist. The program is part of Black History Month celebrations hosted by the Pueblo City-County Library District. The event is **free and open to the public**.

Saturday, Feb. 11

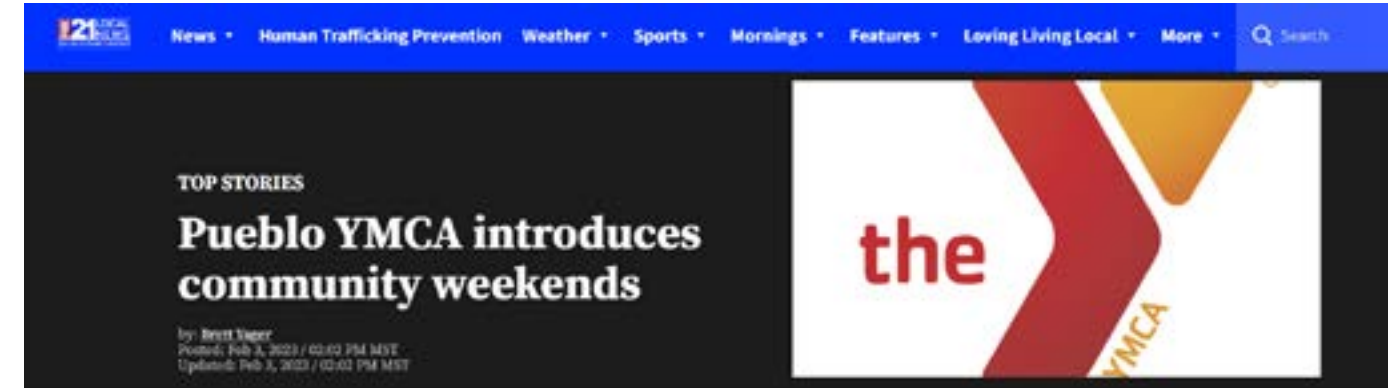
Chess Tournament at Rawlings Public Library

100 E. Abriendo Ave. | 9 a.m. registration, 10:15 a.m. first game | The **Valentine's Day Open** is an unrated timed chess tournament. The club has some board sets, but participants might want to bring their own equipment. Winners will be awarded \$40 for first, \$20 for second and \$15 for third. **Cost is a \$10 entry fee**. The Pueblo Chess Club meets every Monday night from 5 to 8:30 p.m. at the George L. Williams Pavilion, the administration building next to the fountain in City Park, 800 Goodnight Ave. There are no dues, fees or memberships.

Thursday, Feb. 16

History of The Dry at El Pueblo History Museum

301 N. Union Ave. | 6 p.m. | Learn about the **history of a farming community founded by African-American homesteaders South of Manzanola**. Hear from **Alice (Craig) McDonald** of Manzanola, one of the last local descendants of the original settlers of The Dry, which consisted primarily of Black settlers but also included limited numbers of white homesteaders who were already there. This event is **free and open to the public**.



(PUEBLO, Colo.) — The YMCA of Pueblo announced it is welcoming the public with Community Weekends in 2023. Prospective members of the YMCA will have the opportunity to try the YMCA and learn more about the organization. The YMCA of Pueblo has been serving the Pueblo community for 134 years. The Pueblo YMCA offers two functional fitness spaces, three indoor swimming pools, two full-size indoor basketball courts, a public Pueblo City-County Library branch, 30+ group exercise classes, a 44-foot rock climbing wall, and more. On Community Weekends, the Pueblo YMCA will offer guests the

opportunity to purchase day passes without needing to be accompanied by an active YMCA member, allowing guests to try the YMCA without a commitment. “This is the next phase of the Y opening our facility to the public,” says Kelly J Martinez, Senior Membership Experience Director. “We have been preparing ourselves for this moment since COVID restrictions started to ease off during summer 2021.” Community Weekends will occur the first Friday weekend of each month. More information about Community Weekends and day passes can be found on the Pueblo YMCA website.

BUSINESS

Let's talk business: Boreas Camper put to the test in Utah; free tax filing event approaches

The Pueblo Chieftain

Published 6:30 a.m. MT Feb. 5, 2023

Nominations sought for Pueblo's outstanding women

The Pueblo City-County Library District is accepting nominations through 5 p.m. The annual awards honor those women who have made important contributions to the community and celebrates the roles they have played, both large and small, in Pueblo's history.

An in-person awards luncheon will be held at 11 a.m. March 31 at Rawlings Public Library, 100 E. Abriendo Ave. All honorees will receive an "Outstanding Woman of 2023" handmade ceramic art piece

Nominations can be submitted online at pueblolibrary.org/outstandingwomen. Print forms can be mailed or delivered to Rawlings Library, attention Sara Schwartz, 100 E. Abriendo Ave., Pueblo, CO, 81004.

Pueblo City-County Library District expands internet access for users

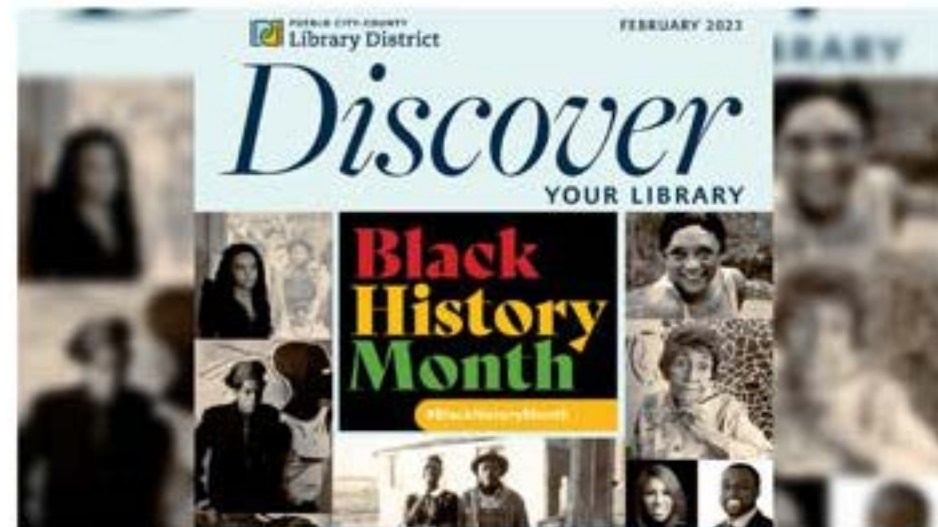
A Federal Communications Commission Emergency Connectivity Fund grant of nearly \$500,000 has enabled the library district to purchase more than 885 WiFi connected devices, expanding the district's digital resource collection by nearly 700%.

Library patrons can check out a device for up to four months. The library also has 500 Chromebooks with built-in WiFi, 285 mobile hotspots and 100 iPads.

"We are extremely proud to bring this size of a broadband connectivity grant to the Pueblo community. It is our goal to serve students and anyone who wouldn't have connectivity otherwise," said Sherri Baca, library executive director.



Pueblo City-County Library District celebrates Black History Month through free events



PCCLD

PUEBLO, Colo. (KRDO) -- The Pueblo City-County Library District is celebrating Black History Month with free events and programs.

Below are just some of the months the community can enjoy for free at PCCLD during February.

Black History Live! Josephine Baker Chautauqua

- This statewide tour features the living-history portrayal by nationally-acclaimed scholar and actor Becky Stone of Josephine Baker, a world-renowned performer, World War II spy, and civil rights activist. The presentation will be followed by a question and answer session, first with the character Josephine Baker, and then with actor Becky Stone.
- At 6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 7 at Hoag Theater on the Pueblo Community College campus 900 W. Orman Ave.
- This event is recommended for ages 18 and older

Artist Talk with David C. Russel Jr.

- David C. Russel Jr. will discuss significant Black American photographers and relate their struggles to produce, display, and sell their work.
- 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 15 at Pueblo West Library, 298 S. Joe Martinez Blvd. Pueblo West
- Ages 18 and older.

History of The Dry

- Learn about the history of a farming community founded by African-American homesteaders located south of Manzanola. Alice (Craig) McDonald of Manzanola is one of the last local descendants of the original settlers of The Dry, which consisted primarily of Black settlers but also included numbers of white homesteaders who were already there. Hear from McDonald about her time and experience living at The Dry. Co-sponsored by El Pueblo History Museum and History Colorado.
- 6 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 16 at El Pueblo History Museum, 301 N. Union Ave.

Black History Month Speaker - Lucille Corsentino

- Lucille Corsentino discusses notable African American graves in Roselawn Cemetery's historical section.
- Refreshments will be provided.
- 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 22 at Barkman Branch Library, 1300 Jerry Murphy Rd.
- All ages

Be Inspired By Five African-American Artists Who Helped Illuminate the Artworld Through Their Perspective

- Journey through the lives of influential Black artists Augusta Savage, Jacob Lawrence, Gordon Parks, Jean-Michel Basquiat, and Kara Walker. Understand their creativity, their struggle, and how their artwork inspired the next generations of Black artists. Taught by Roncalli STEM Academy teacher Freda Hancock.
- 11 a.m.-1 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 24 at Pueblo West Branch Library, 298 S. Joe Martinez Blvd. Pueblo West
- All Supplies are provided.
- Registration is required for this event call (719) 562-5600 or [click here](#).
- All ages

Creative Space at Lucero Branch Library

- After-school art workshops inspired by the work of 20th-century artist Jean-Michel Basquiat.
- 3-5 p.m., Every Wednesday, at Lucero Branch Library, 1315 E. 7th St.
- Recommended for ages 17 and younger.

These are just a few of the Black History month programs available for free at PCCLD. For more Black History Month programs, [click here](#).

Article Topic Follows: [News](#)

ENTERTAINMENT

Things to Do in Pueblo Feb. 24-March 8: Black history, music, art and Broadway theater



Tracy Harmon The Pueblo Chieftain

Published 4:00 p.m. MT Feb. 23, 2023

Friday, Feb. 24

Be Inspired By Five Black Artists at Pueblo West Branch Library

298 S. Joe Martinez Blvd. | 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. | Journey through the lives of influential Black artists Augusta Savage, Jacob Lawrence, Gordon Parks, Jean-Michel Basquiat and Kara Walker. Learn about their creativity and struggles from Roncalli STEM Academy teacher Freda Hancock. All supplies are provided. **Registration is required** by calling 719-562-5600 or visit pueblolibrary.org.

Pueblo library closing to clean meth residue in restrooms



Graphic of meth. (Radipunk / Wikipedia / CC BY-SA 4.0 / MGN)

By Lauren Watson

Published: Feb. 24, 2023 at 8:09 AM MST | Updated: 3 hours ago

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PUEBLO, Colo. (KKTV) – A branch of the Pueblo City-County Library District (PCCLD) will close for a week in order to handle meth residue detected in the public restrooms.

The Barkman Branch Library, located on the northeast side of the city, will close Monday, Feb. 27 and remain closed for the rest of the week. Library officials said they conducted initial screenings at the branch late last month, and the results of those screenings showed the presence of meth residue samples above the .10 micrograms per 100 centimeter standard set by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE).

Library officials said immediate action was taken when these results became known in an effort to ensure the safety and well-being of both patrons and their staff.

"The library district's goal is to maintain safe and comfortable public library buildings. We have tested the Barkman Library based on recent, elevated incidents of drug use at that location," PCCLD Executive Director Shern Baca said. "We are following the recommendations of the environmental testing company and CDPHE and have engaged a state certified company to complete the remediation. While we believe the risks to public health are low at the levels tested at the Barkman Library, we are committed to protecting public health in taking these steps."

Library representatives said there is no indication at this time that individuals who have been in the library and its restrooms in recent weeks face significant health risks.

All other PCCLD locations are unaffected by this closure.

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Pueblo library closes to clean meth residue in restrooms

Leftover meth usage can be seen as a film on countertops or floors.

KKTV 11 News at 4 (Recurring)

By [Lauren Watson](#) and [Katelyn Quisenberry](#)

Published: Feb. 24, 2023 at 8:09 AM MST | Updated: Feb. 24, 2023 at 11:07 AM MST

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PUEBLO, Colo. (KKTV) - A branch of the Pueblo City-County Library District (PCCLD) will close for a week to handle meth residue detected in the public restrooms.

The Barkman Branch Library, located on the city's northeast side, will close Monday, Feb. 27, and remain closed for the rest of the week. Library officials said they conducted initial screenings at the branch late last month, and the results of those screenings showed the presence of meth residue samples above the .10 micrograms per the 100-centimeter standard set by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE).

Library officials said immediate action was taken when these results became known to ensure the safety and well-being of patrons and their staff. While the levels were low, officials wanted to proceed with extra precautions.

"Basically, that shows there was a small trace of this," Nick Potter, Director of Community Relations & Development, said. "It was nothing that was hugely major. We are basing it not on a huge library facility. We are basing it off of an individual residential home."

Excess meth usage can be seen as a film on countertops or floors.

Barkman Library said they have seen an uptick in meth usage here.

"It's definitely increased," Potter said. "And that's why we are doing the closure. So, the increase in drug use inside of this facility is why we are doing this. Unfortunately abusing public facilities is not a new thing."

A library spokesperson described the library as being the heart of the community. Two senior living centers and one transitional housing facility are just across the street from it.

A week of being closed will affect the residents who depend on the WiFi, books, and restrooms.

"We know that libraries are refuges for the community. They are safe places for our community," Potter said. "We are taking a proactive approach and really getting in front of it before it's a larger issue."

To combat the larger issue, library officials have discussed installing sensors.

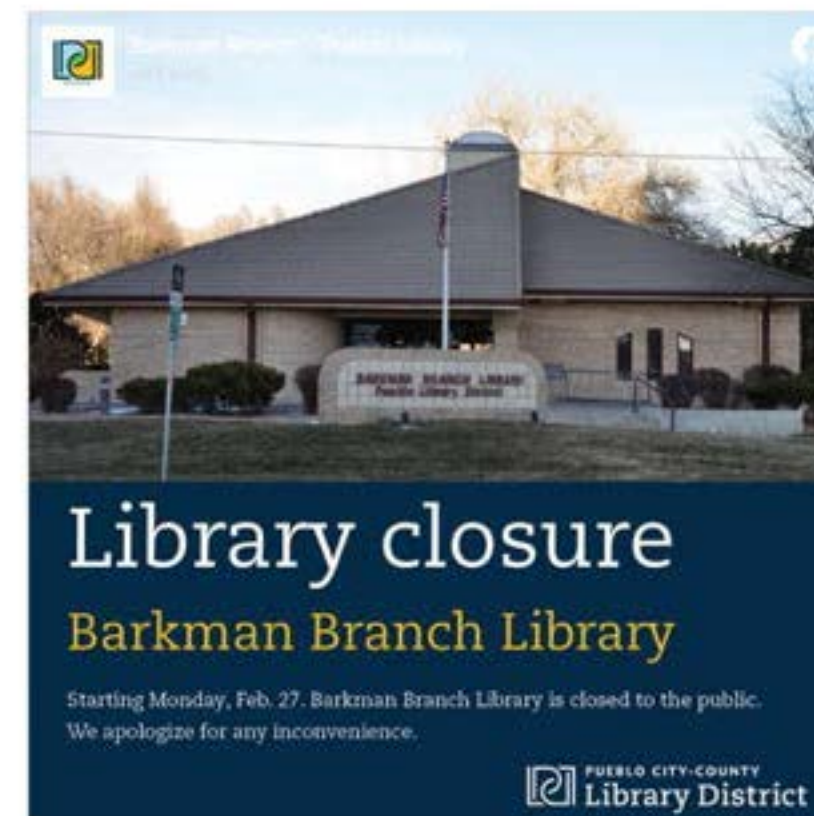
The Pikes Peak Library in Colorado Springs had its own meth contamination. They now plan to install sensors to pick up changes in the air. Barkman Library is discussing this option as well.

Another way Barkman is looking to solve the epidemic is to lock the restrooms and have visitors request access.

"Unfortunately, we are going to have to monitor restroom use kind of to an end degree in the situation," Potter said. "So, what we will be doing is having locked facilities and they will have to ask permission to use the restroom. We also will be getting identification information, whether that's a library card or another form of ID, to know who is using the restroom so if there is a bad actor, we can issue a suspension for that person."

Library representatives said there is no indication that individuals who have been in the library and its restrooms in recent weeks face significant health risks.

All other PCCLD locations are unaffected by this closure. PCCLD officials told 11 News the Barkman Branch Library will remain open Friday and Saturday to allow patrons to pick up any library items.





Courtesy Pueblo City-County Library District

Barkman Branch Library in the Pueblo City-County Library District. Jan. 2015

Barkman Library in Pueblo closes due to meth residue



By Andrea Chalfin
· Feb. 24, 2023, 1:41 pm

A branch of the Pueblo City-County Library District is closing Monday due to the presence of methamphetamine. The Barkman Branch Library in northeast Pueblo is [the latest in a string of libraries](#) across the Front Range to temporarily close due to meth residue.

According to the district, initial screenings of the facility's public bathrooms came after a recent uptick in drug use there. Results showed levels higher than what the state considers safe. The risk to the public, they said, is low.

The district hasn't tested any other branches but will continue to monitor reported drug use.

Cleanup and retesting will keep Barkman Library closed, likely through the end of the week. All other locations in the Pueblo City-County Library District remain open.

The Barkman branch of the Pueblo City-County Library District will close starting Monday after test screenings showed methamphetamine residue present in the branch's bathrooms.

Fresh Start Environmental will start remediation efforts on Monday to remove that residue and the branch will be closed through Saturday next week.

The library district will again test for methamphetamine residue after the cleaning is complete and reopen the branch once it receives clearance from a specialist that no residue is detected in those samples, said Nick Potter, PCCLD's director of community relations.

In January, the library district began its own in-house testing and cleaning at the Barkman branch, Potter said. Staff could detect a "smoky, chemical smell" in the bathrooms, he said.

PCCLD then reached out to a testing company, All-Phase Environmental Consultants, on Jan. 26 to conduct further testing after noticing an uptick in staff reports detailing drug use within the men's and women's bathrooms at the Barkman branch.

The library district and the consulting company in their screenings for methamphetamine contamination in the Barkman branch's bathrooms found samples that were above the .10 micrograms per 100 centimeter standard set by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, the library district said in a news release.

Potter said that standard is being used as a reference as it is inclusive to residential buildings and properties. CDPHE does not have methamphetamine testing regulations that apply to commercial buildings.

PCCLD also said in the release that there is "no indication at this time that individuals who have been in the library and its restrooms in recent weeks face significant health risks." However, people who have visited the branch recently and are experiencing headache, nausea, dizziness and fatigue -- each a symptom of exposure to low levels of methamphetamine contamination -- should consult their health care provider, the library district said.

Sherri Baca, executive director for PCCLD, said in the news release that testing at the Barkman Library for methamphetamine contamination started "based on recent, elevated incidents of drug use at that location."

"We are following the recommendations of the environmental testing company and CDPHE and have engaged a state certified company to complete the remediation," Baca said. "While we believe the risks to public health are low at the levels tested at the Barkman Library, we are committed to protecting public health in taking these steps."

Potter said as of Feb. 24, no other PCCLD branches have been tested or reported instances of drug use within the facilities, but the library district will conduct an "ongoing, active review" of each of those locations and test them as needed. Those locations will remain open.

Because CDPHE does not regulate methamphetamine testing at commercial facilities, it hasn't directed PCCLD to start remediation efforts, Potter said.

"This is something that the library district is really taking upon itself," Potter said.

PCCLD said in the release it is working with the Pueblo Department of Public Health and Environment to address the contamination. The library district has spent about \$6,500 as of Feb. 24 to conduct cleaning and testing at the Barkman branch, Potter said, with each round of cleaning and testing costing roughly \$1,000.

Potter said library staff at the Barkman branch in recent weeks have begun to request a library card or some form of identification so they can better track who's using the bathroom and how long they're in them. That policy has not been extended to other PCCLD branches but is something that could be implemented if similar situations occur at those locations, he said.

"That's a little bit invasive, so we'd really like to not have to do that in all of our facilities," Potter said.

The Barkman branch is the latest of several public libraries along the Front Range to temporarily close in recent months following reports of methamphetamine contamination at those facilities. Libraries in Boulder, Englewood, Littleton, Arvada and Colorado Springs have temporarily closed for that reason.

Potter said the closure in Boulder, which was the first, prompted other Front Range libraries to start doing their own testing.

"This was something that a lot of public libraries didn't know about," Potter said. "Testing is a big part of (why these libraries are temporarily closing)."

Potter said it would be a "major expense" to PCCLD to test every bathroom at each of its branches at this time, but that it will monitor and test if incident reports pile up at a specific location.

Chieftain reporter Josue Perez can be reached at JHPerez@gannett.com. Follow him on Twitter @josuepwrites.

Barkman Library closed due to meth contamination

by [Alina Lee](#)

Posted: Feb 24, 2023 / 10:31 AM MST

Updated: Feb 24, 2023 / 09:36 PM MST

SHARE

(PUEBLO, Colo.) — The Barkman Branch Library will be closed and will remain closed for the remainder of the week for methamphetamine residue remediation starting Monday, Feb. 27.

In January 2023, Pueblo City-County Library District (PCCLD) began to conduct initial screenings for methamphetamine contamination of the restrooms at the Belmont-area library branch located at 1300 Jerry Murphy Road.

Screening results showed the presence of methamphetamine residue present in public restrooms. Samples were above the .10 micrograms per 100-centimeter standard set by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE).

"We have tested the Barkman Library based on recent, elevated incidents of drug use at that location," said Sherri Baca PCCLD's executive director. "While we believe the risks to public health are low at the levels tested at the Barkman Library, we are committed to protecting public health in taking these steps."

At this time, there is no indication individuals who have been in the library and its restrooms in recent weeks face significant health risks, per PCCLD. Symptoms of exposure to low levels of methamphetamine contamination can include:

- Headache
- Nausea
- Dizziness
- Fatigue

Recent visitors of the library experiencing any of these symptoms should consult their healthcare practitioner.

The library district has engaged a state-certified company to complete remediation and is following recommendations of the environmental testing company as well as CDPHE. Library district officials are also working closely with the Pueblo Department of Public Health and Environment (PDPHE).

The Barkman Library will remain closed until remediation work and retesting show clearance test results. It will reopen on the earliest possible date, said PCCLD.

All other PCCLD locations will remain open at this time.



News

By Riley Carroll

Published February 24, 2023 7:58 AM



Barkman Library in Pueblo to close due to meth contamination



KRDO

PUEBLO, Colo. (KRDO) — The Barkman branch library will be closed starting Feb. 27 and will remain closed for the week due to methamphetamine residue remediation, according to the Pueblo City-County Library District.

PCCLD said on Jan. 26, they began screening for methamphetamine contamination of the restrooms at the Belmont-area library branch, located at 1300 Jerry Murphy Rd.

"The library district's goal is to maintain safe and comfortable public library buildings. We have tested the Barkman Library based on recent, elevated incidents of drug use at that location. We are following the recommendations of the environmental testing company and CDPHE and have engaged a state-certified company to complete the remediation. While we believe the risks to public health are low at the levels tested at the Barkman Library, we are committed to protecting public health in taking these steps," Sherri Baca PCCLD's executive director said.

The screenings showed the presence of methamphetamine residue present in the public bathrooms. Bathroom samples were above the .10 micrograms per 100-centimeter standard as set by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE).

According to the PCCLD, Colorado laws dealing with methamphetamine testing cover residential buildings and properties only. The PCCLD said the CDPHE doesn't have regulations for commercial-use buildings at this time. That means current residential standards are used as a reference to determine if meth levels are elevated.

Remediation work will be completed by Fresh-Start Environmental and retesting will keep the Barkman Library closed until the clearance test results are received. PCCLD said they will reopen the branch as soon as possible.

All other PCCLD locations remain open at this time.

Meth contamination temporarily closes another southern Colorado library

ABBEY SOUKUP abbey.soukup@gazette.com Feb 24, 2023 Updated Feb 24, 2023 [Comments](#)

A branch of the Pueblo City-County Library District will temporarily close in order to handle meth residue detected in restrooms, joining the list of libraries along Colorado's Front Range affected by meth contamination.

The Barkman Library at 1300 Jerry Murphy Road will close for a week, according to a press release from the Pueblo City-County Library District.



SUBSCRIBER CONTENT

Meth contamination around Colorado Springs: It could be everywhere

By Debbie Kelley debbie.kelley@gazette.com

The library will be closed starting Monday, according to library officials, and will remain closed for the week. Library officials said initial screenings conducted at the branch in late January showed the presence of meth residue above the state standard of .10 micrograms per 100 centimeters, set by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

Library officials said that immediate action was taken in response to these initial screenings to ensure the well-being and safety of library patrons and staff.

"The library district's goal is to maintain safe and comfortable public library buildings. We have tested the Barkman Library based on recent, elevated incidents of drug use at that location," Sherri Baca, executive director of the district, said. "We are following the recommendations of the environmental testing company and CDPHE and have engaged a state-certified company to complete the remediation. While we believe the risks to public health are low at the levels tested at the Barkman Library, we are committed to protecting public health in taking these steps."

According to library representatives, there is no present indication that individuals who have been to the library or its restrooms face any significant health risks.

The closure of the Barkman Library in Pueblo follows the closure of Penrose Library branch Pikes Peak Library District after initial screenings of restrooms tested above the state's maximum threshold for meth residue.

Several restrooms in two of three Pikes Peak Library District branches swabbed earlier this month in the 15-branch Pikes system showed meth residue, [officials recently announced](#).

Penrose Library in downtown Colorado Springs joined a list of at least four other libraries in Colorado in recent months that temporarily shuttered due to meth contamination, including one in Littleton that was scheduled to reopen this week after being closed for more than a month.

Library officials said previously that findings from the other Colorado libraries is what prompted the screenings at Barkman Library and PPLD locations.

Boulder Main Library, the first library to close in December because of meth contamination, found traces of the drug in seating areas and bathrooms, including on a baby changing table, the library reported.

Health risks from short-term periodic exposure from absorption through the skin or even putting hands to mouth after touching a surface that has residue are low, officials say.

"The good thing is that the way bathrooms are constructed is you have an exhaust ventilation system that goes directly outside," said Mike Van Dyke, an industrial hygienist and associate professor at the Colorado School of Public Health at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus in Aurora. "You're not distributing this methamphetamine aerosol throughout the facility, and the surfaces that are most highly contaminated are those surfaces that you're not going to touch."