



# Public Participation Plan Sound Mattress and Felt Co. Site Tacoma, Washington

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**Facility Site ID: 1232087**

**Cleanup Site ID: 1615**

For the

**Toxics Cleanup Program**

Washington State Department of Ecology  
Olympia, Washington

January 2022

## Publication Information

This plan is available on the Department of Ecology's website at:

<https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/gsp/sitepage.aspx?csid=1615>

## Contact Information

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Lacey, WA 98503

Phone: 360-407-6300

**Website**<sup>1</sup>: [Washington State Department of Ecology](http://Washington State Department of Ecology)

## ADA Accessibility

The Department of Ecology is committed to providing people with disabilities access to information and services by meeting or exceeding the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, and Washington State Policy #188.

To request an ADA accommodation, contact Ecology by phone at 360-407-6831 or email at [ecyadacoordinator@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:ecyadacoordinator@ecy.wa.gov). For Washington Relay Service or TTY call 711 or 877-833-6341. Visit Ecology's website for more information.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/About-us/Contact-Us>

# Department of Ecology's Regional Offices

## Map of Counties Served



<b>Southwest Region</b> 360-407-6300	<b>Northwest Region</b> 206-594-0000	<b>Central Region</b> 509-575-2490	<b>Eastern Region</b> 509-329-3400
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Region	Counties served	Mailing Address	Phone
<b>Southwest</b>	Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Mason, Lewis, Pacific, Pierce, Skamania, Thurston, Wahkiakum	PO Box 47775 Olympia, WA 98504	360-407-6300
<b>Northwest</b>	Island, King, Kitsap, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, Whatcom	15700 Dayton Ave N Shoreline, WA 98133	206-594-0000
<b>Central</b>	Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Kittitas, Klickitat, Okanogan, Yakima	1250 W Alder St Union Gap, WA 98903	509-575-2490
<b>Eastern</b>	Adams, Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Walla Walla, Whitman	4601 N Monroe Spokane, WA 99205	509-329-3400
<b>Headquarters</b>	Across Washington	PO Box 46700 Olympia, WA 98504	360-407-6000

# Public Participation Plan

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**Sound Mattress and Felt Co. Site  
1940 E 11<sup>th</sup> Street  
Tacoma, WA 98421**

Toxics Cleanup Program  
Washington State Department of Ecology  
Southwest Regional Office  
Lacey, WA

**January 2022**



DEPARTMENT OF  
**ECOLOGY**  
State of Washington

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# Public Involvement in Contamination Cleanup

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) developed this public participation plan (plan) for cleaning up contamination for the Sound Mattress and Felt Co. Site (Site). The purpose of the plan is to promote meaningful community involvement during cleanup.

The plan describes ways Ecology will inform the public about contamination investigations and cleanup options throughout the cleanup process. Ecology encourages the public to learn about and get involved in decision-making opportunities. This plan identifies how and when the public can get involved during different stages of the investigation and cleanup of contamination.

## Site contacts

To be included in the site record, comments about the cleanup process must be submitted during comment periods. Questions and informal comments or information about the Site's history are welcome anytime.

### Ecology

Southwest Regional Office  
300 Desmond Drive SE  
Lacey, WA 98503

Sandy Smith, site manager  
[sandy.smith@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:sandy.smith@ecy.wa.gov)  
360-999-9588

Nancy Davis, public involvement coordinator  
[nancy.davis@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:nancy.davis@ecy.wa.gov)  
360-489-4971

## Public Participation Grants

Grants may be available to neighborhood committees, non-profits, and other groups interested in the Site. For contaminated sites, these funds can be used to:

- Hire an expert to help interpret technical information<sup>2</sup>
- Conduct activities that enhance the public's understanding of, and participation in, the cleanup process

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<sup>2</sup> Ecology currently does not have a citizen technical advisor for providing technical assistance to citizens on issues related to the investigation and cleanup of the site.

For more information about public participation grants, please contact Faith Wimberley at 425-275-7285 or [faith.wimberley@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:faith.wimberley@ecy.wa.gov). You may also visit the [Public Participation Grant website](#).<sup>3</sup>

## Washington's Cleanup Laws

Ecology works to clean up contaminated properties throughout the state. Cleanups are construction projects that remove, treat, and/or contain potentially hazardous substances. Ecology uses the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) and accompanying regulations for cleanup activities.

This plan is required under MTCA, a law that passed in 1989. MTCA provides guidelines for contaminated site cleanup in Washington State and sets standards to ensure the cleanup protects human health and the environment.

### Model Toxics Control Act

MTCA began as a grassroots citizen's initiative in 1988, and started the process of systematically cleaning up contaminated sites in Washington. Under MTCA, a current or past property owner or operator may be held responsible for cleaning up contamination on, or coming from, their property to standards that are safe for human health and the environment.

Ecology enacts MTCA and oversees cleanups in the state and issues regulations and guidance governing those cleanups. The regulations are found in [Chapter 173-340 Washington Administrative Code \(WAC\)](#).<sup>4</sup> Ecology investigates reports of property contamination, and if the contamination is seen as a significant threat to human health or the environment, the contaminated property is placed on the Hazardous Sites List, and the cleanup process begins.

Public participation is an important part of cleanup under the MTCA process. Participation needs are assessed at each cleanup site according to the level of public interest and the degree of risk posed by the contamination. Individuals who live near the site, community groups, businesses, government, other organizations, and interested parties have the opportunity to get involved by commenting on the cleanup process.

Under MTCA, the cleanup process generally includes five phases. Each phase includes an opportunity for the public to review and comment on cleanup documents.

### State Environmental Policy Act

The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) is followed during review and development of cleanup plans.

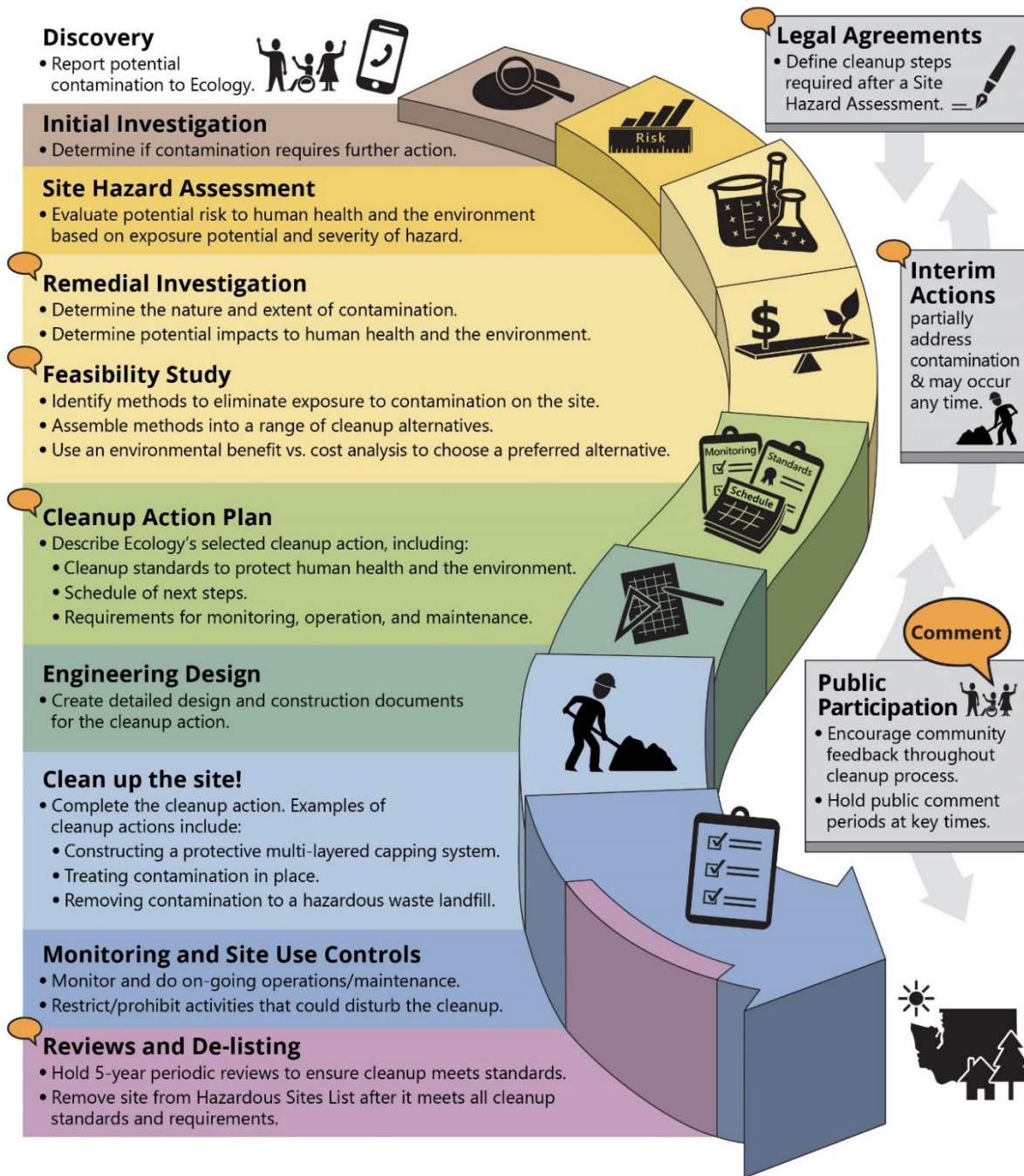
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<sup>3</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/About-us/Payments-contracts-grants/Grants-loans/Find-a-grant-or-loan/Public-participation-grants>

<sup>4</sup> <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/publications/9406.pdf>



# Washington's Formal Cleanup Process



 **Washington's Cleanup Law**  
Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA)

MTCA defines the cleanup process. This public-initiated environmental law directs upland cleanups (on land or in groundwater) and sediment cleanups (in freshwater or marine environments). Ecology enacts MTCA and regulates the cleanup process.

September 2019  
Ecology Publication 19-09-166

Figure 1. Steps in Washington's cleanup process.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/documents/1909166.pdf>

# Site Information

## Site description

The Site is generally located at 1940 East 11<sup>th</sup> Street near the Sitcum Waterway in the Tacoma Tideflats.

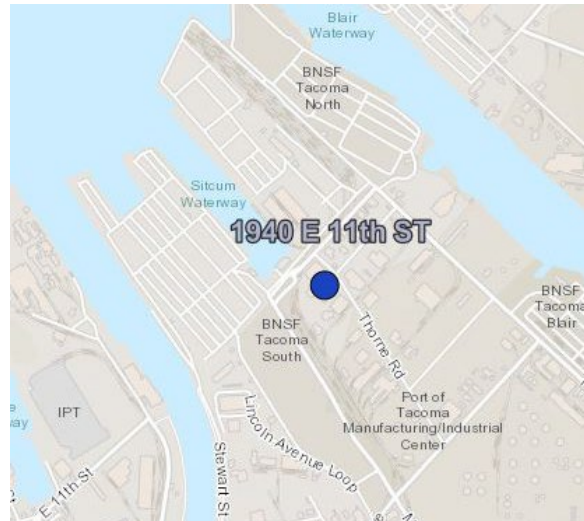


Figure 2. Sound Mattress Site is located southeast of the Sitcum Waterway on the Tacoma Tideflats.

The Site is about 10 acres and includes nearby properties. The affected properties are on Thorne Road and Sitcum Plaza, on railway property, and street right-of-ways next to these properties. The Port of Tacoma (Port) owns the three affected parcels, including 2275200661 (also known as Parcel 91), 695000502, and 2275200633.



Figure 3. The blue line shows the Site location. The thin red lines show affected parcel boundaries. The last three numbers of parcel 2275200661 (Parcel 91), 695000502, and 2275200633 are shown. The areas are not exact.

In 1948, Washington Steel Products constructed a building on Parcel 91. The facility made metal products. In 1964, Sound Mattress and Felt Co. (Sound Mattress) purchased the parcel and leased it to several businesses, including Brown and Haley, Inc.

In 2006-2007, the Port purchased Parcel 91 and in 2014-2015 demolished the building. Now trucks and trailers are stored there. The Port's administration building is across the street on the other side of East Sitcum Way, next to the Sitcum Waterway.

## How the Site became contaminated

Soil and groundwater became contaminated with solvents and metals due to historical industrial processes related to metal fabrication conducted on Parcel 91 and other unknown sources.

## Hazardous substances known or suspected at the Site

From about 2004 to 2006, several independent investigations showed that chemicals hazardous to human health and the environment are present in groundwater above state cleanup standards.

Chlorinated volatile organic compounds (CVOCs) are metal degreasing solvents. CVOCs like tetrachloroethylene (PCE), trichloroethylene (TCE), dichloroethene (DCE), and vinyl chloride (VC) are present in groundwater above state cleanup levels. The area of solvent contamination in groundwater is called a plume.

The plume of PCE is likely being chemically broken-down in some areas by naturally occurring microbes to form TCE, DCE, and VC.

Metals in soil are suspected in concentrations above state cleanup levels. The metals contaminants include arsenic, cadmium, copper, lead, nickel, and zinc.

## Previous cleanup actions at the Site

The owners of Sound Mattress entered into Ecology's [Voluntary Cleanup Program](#)<sup>6</sup> (VCP) in 2007. Between 2007 and 2017, Sound Mattress completed several site investigations.

In 2010, building materials and coatings containing PCBs were discovered in the warehouse building on Parcel 91. PCBs leached into soil and groundwater surrounding the building and were discovered in the stormwater system. In late 2014 to early 2015, the Port excavated contaminated soil surrounding the building, removed solids from the storm sewer catch basin, removed PCB-containing materials from the building, and demolished the building. The contaminated soil, solids, PCB-containing building materials, and building demolition debris were disposed of offsite in permitted hazardous (Subtitle C) and non-hazardous solid waste (Subtitle D) landfills.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/Spills-Cleanup/Contamination-cleanup/Voluntary-Cleanup-Program>

In 2020, Sound Mattress left the VCP and the Port and Wyeth LLC were named as potentially liable persons (PLPs) responsible for completing the cleanup.

## Cleanup plans

Investigations at the Site are not completed, and Ecology needs information to develop the plan to clean up the Site. To accomplish this, Ecology and the Port will enter into a legal agreement, Agreed Order DE 19403. The Agreed Order outlines the responsibilities of the Port to investigate the Site and describe plans to clean up the Site. The public will have an opportunity to review and comment on the Agreed Order (see Figure 1).

The Port will complete the Remedial Investigation (RI) report, which explains what type and where contamination is located at the Site. The report also identifies actual and potential ways that people and the environment can be exposed to contamination.

The Port will complete the Feasibility Study (FS), which compares alternative methods to clean up the Site.

With information in the RI/FS, the Port will complete a preliminary draft cleanup action plan describing the method used to clean up the Site.

Ecology will use the preliminary plan to prepare the draft Cleanup Action Plan (dCAP) describing the proposed plan for how the Site will be cleaned up.

Once completed, the RI/FS and dCAP will be available for public review and comment before the reports are finalized.

The Cleanup Action Plan (CAP) CAP will be implemented under a separate legal agreement that will be available for public review and comment.

After the plan for cleanup is finalized, the detailed engineering design phase and cleanup construction can begin.

## Area community

The Site is located in Tacoma's Port Maritime & Industrial District (PMI). Permitted uses for Parcel 91 are heavy industrial, warehousing, storage, vehicle service & repair. Presently the use code is 9180-vacant industrial land. The Site is surrounded by properties used for industry and business.

Nearby the Site is a large US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Superfund site, [Commencement Bay, Nearshore/Tide Flats](https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/SiteProfiles/index.cfm?fuseaction=second.Cleanup&id=1000981)<sup>7</sup> that was placed on the National Priorities List in 1983. EPA's site encompasses 12 square miles of shallow water, shoreline, and adjacent land that includes an active commercial seaport. Due to widespread contamination, EPA divided the site into several units managed as distinct cleanup sites. The Sitcum Waterway sediment unit is part of the EPA's site. The Sitcum Waterway was dredged to remove contaminated sediments.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/SiteProfiles/index.cfm?fuseaction=second.Cleanup&id=1000981>

Ecology will reach out to cultural community organizations as part of our outreach and provide information in other languages as appropriate following federal guidance.<sup>8</sup> The non-English language most widely spoken in the Census Tract area is Spanish. When appropriate, Ecology will provide outreach in Spanish. We strive to make our public participation efforts as inclusive as possible and welcome your input about how best to reach the nearby community.

The Puyallup Tribe of Indians is a federally recognized tribe that owns land and relies on resources that could be affected by the contamination at the Site. Ecology will invite the Tribe to be engaged with any decision-making process for this Site. There is ample opportunity to be involved throughout the process on a government-to-government basis.

## Public Participation Activities

Members of the public may ask questions, submit informal comments, or share site information at any time. Interested parties do not need to wait for a formal public comment period to contact Ecology.

However, to be included in the formal site record, comments about the site investigation, cleanup alternatives, or cleanups must be submitted during formal comment periods. In addition, the public is invited to review site documents before they become final. This is the most direct and influential way to learn more about the Site and be involved in the cleanup's decision-making.

### How we share information with the community

During specific stages of the cleanup, Ecology will mail notices about public comment periods to addresses surrounding the Site. The mailing list area will vary depending on the type of contamination and where it's located, but the list will at least include addresses within a 1/4-mile radius of the Site and other interested organizations and individuals. These notices will provide general information about the Site, contact information for submitting comments, and times and locations of public meetings or hearings or how to request one if not yet scheduled.

Ecology may also develop documents outside of comment periods to keep the community updated on the Site's status. These informational documents will be available online and at document repositories. Print copies may be mailed to the nearby community if we feel the message warrants the associated cost and resources.

Comment period notices and other Site announcements may be posted in various locations in the community (for example, local businesses, schools, libraries).

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<sup>8</sup> Guidance to Environmental Protection Agency Financial Assistance Recipients Regarding Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons, 69 Fed. Reg. § 35602 (June 15, 2004).



## Postal mailing list

Ecology generates a mailing list that includes addresses within a 1/4-mile radius of the site and relevant local, state, and federal government contacts.

These people receive public comment notices when draft documents are available.

We will add additional individuals, organizations, and other interested parties to the mailing list as requested. If you would like to be added to the mailing list for this Site, please contact Nancy Davis at 360-489-4971 or [nancy.davis@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:nancy.davis@ecy.wa.gov).

## Site Register

Ecology publishes public comment periods, events, and other cleanup notices in the [Site Register](#).<sup>9</sup> To receive the *Site Register* by email, please contact Sarah Kellington at 360-407-7466 or [sarah.kellington@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:sarah.kellington@ecy.wa.gov), or [subscribe online](#).<sup>10</sup>

## Newspaper display ads or legal notices

We announce public comment periods and events in ads or notices published in *The News Tribune*. We will also publish notice on our [Public Input & Events Listing](#).<sup>11</sup>

## Email lists

Ecology maintains an email list for Commencement Bay to update interested persons about this Site. People can be added, removed, or change their subscription settings by going to [Commencement Bay Cleanup](#).<sup>12</sup>

## Ecology's website and social media platforms

We maintain a website for the [Sound Mattress Site](#).<sup>13</sup> The website provides information and links to download cleanup documents related to the Site.

We may also share information about cleanup sites through [news releases, our blog, and social media](#).<sup>14</sup>

## Document repositories

In consideration of public health and safety during the Covid-19 pandemic, Ecology offices are open by appointment at this time. This may change in response to future health and safety requirements. At this time, document repositories are open, and during public comment periods you can find print documents at the following locations.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Guidance-technical-assistance/Site-Register-lists-and-data>

<sup>10</sup> [https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WAECY/subscriber/new?topic\\_id=WAECY\\_118](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WAECY/subscriber/new?topic_id=WAECY_118)

<sup>11</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/Events/Search/Listing>

<sup>12</sup> [https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WAECY/subscriber/new?topic\\_id=WAECY\\_33](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WAECY/subscriber/new?topic_id=WAECY_33)

<sup>13</sup> <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/gsp/sitepage.aspx?csid=1615>

<sup>14</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/About-us/Who-we-are/News>

Tacoma Public Library – Main Branch  
Northwest Room  
1102 Tacoma Ave South  
Tacoma, WA 98402  
253-280-2814

Washington Department of Ecology  
Southwest Regional Office  
300 Desmond Drive SE  
Lacey, WA 98503

Please contact the library to determine if an appointment is necessary for viewing documents. To schedule an appointment to view documents at Ecology, please contact Susan Baxter at 360-407-6365 or [publicdisclosureswro@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:publicdisclosureswro@ecy.wa.gov).

## Signs around the cleanup Site

We may also install signs displaying information about project status, traffic impacts, and health risks around the cleanup Site.

## How to share information with us

We invite the public to share information with us anytime by phone and email. During specific stages of the cleanup, we will solicit the public to share information with us.

At a minimum, MTCA requires 30-day public comment periods for draft cleanup documents and 14-day comment periods SEPA documents. SEPA documents are often available for public review with other cleanup documents. In that case, we combine the comment periods, and they last at least 30 days. We may hold comment periods longer than 30 days.

We may also identify public concerns and cleanup goals by meeting with and soliciting information from interested community members and organizations. To collaborate with us about this Site, please contact Nancy Davis at 360-489-4971 or [nancy.davis@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:nancy.davis@ecy.wa.gov).

## Public comment periods

Formal 30-day comment periods allow interested members of the public to comment on draft documents, legal agreements, and proposed cleanup actions. If there is significant interest, Ecology may extend the public comment period. When Ecology oversees SEPA determinations, we hold comment periods for at least two weeks and may extend to 30 days or more when other cleanup documents are concurrently available for review.

Following a comment period, we publish the input we received and respond to significant comments and questions. If the comments result in significant changes to the cleanup documents, then the documents will be revised and re-issued for public review. If the comments do not result in significant changes, then they are finalized.

## Public events

We hold public meetings, workshops, open houses, and public hearings based on community interest. If we have not scheduled a hearing, we will hold one if 10 people request it, and this may cause us to extend a public comment period so the meeting occurs during the comment period.

Events are held at locations close to the Site that meet Americans with Disabilities Act standards. Public meetings, workshops, open houses, and hearings are always announced in advance using a variety of methods.

## Americans with Disabilities Act

To request ADA accommodation for disabilities, or printed materials in a format for the visually impaired, contact the Ecology ADA Coordinator at 360-407-6831 or [ecyadacoordinator@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:ecyadacoordinator@ecy.wa.gov), or visit <https://ecology.wa.gov/accessibility>. People with impaired hearing may call Washington Relay Service at 711. People with speech disability may call TTY at 877-833-6341.

## Plan Amendments

Ecology developed this plan following MTCA regulations (WAC 173-340-600). We review it as the cleanup progresses and amend it as necessary. You may suggest amendments to Nancy Davis at 360-489-4971 or [nancy.davis@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:nancy.davis@ecy.wa.gov).

This plan includes information for the public regarding opportunities for public involvement and comment. The outreach activities discussed in this section reflect Ecology's current plans for keeping the public informed and providing ways for those interested in the Site to communicate their concerns and questions to us.

If you feel the planned outreach activities and mechanisms described in this plan are insufficient, or should otherwise be modified, we will work to find solutions. New outreach activities or outreach tools established as a result can be implemented right away, with or without amending this plan.

## Glossary

**Agreed Order:** A legal agreement between Ecology and a Potentially Liable Person (see below) to conduct work toward a cleanup.

**Cleanup:** Actions that deal with a release or threatened release of hazardous substances that could affect public health or the environment. Ecology often uses the term "cleanup" broadly to describe response actions or phases of cleanup, such as the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study.



**Cleanup Action Plan (CAP):** A plan that explains which cleanup option(s) will be used at a site. The Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study provide the data and analysis to write a CAP. It also takes into account public comments and public concerns.

**Comment Period:** A time period during which the public can review and comment on various documents and proposed actions. For example, Ecology may hold a comment period to provide community members an opportunity to review and comment on proposed cleanup action alternatives and proposed plans.

**Contaminant:** Any hazardous substance that does not occur naturally or occurs at greater than natural background levels.

**Feasibility Study:** This study develops and evaluates cleanup options for a site.

**Groundwater:** Water found beneath the earth's surface that fills spaces between materials such as sand, soil, or gravel. In some aquifers, groundwater occurs in large enough amounts to be used for drinking water, irrigation, and other purposes.

**Repository:** A file containing site information and reports for public review. It is usually located in a public building convenient for local residents, such as a public library, school, or city hall.

**Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA):** A law passed by Washington voter initiative in 1988. Its purpose is to find, investigate, and clean up places where hazardous substances have been released. It defines Ecology's role and encourages public involvement in cleanup decisions.

**Potentially Liable Person (PLP):** Any individual(s) or company(s) potentially responsible for, or contributing to, the contamination problems at a site. Whenever possible, Ecology requires PLPs to clean up sites.

**Public Notice:** At a minimum, adequate notice mailed to all persons who have made a timely request of Ecology and to persons residing in the potentially affected vicinity of the proposed action; mailed to appropriate news media; published in the local (city and county) newspaper of largest circulation; and the opportunity for the interested persons to comment.

**Public Participation Plan:** A plan that describes how the public can provide input on the cleanup of the site.

**Remedial Investigation:** This study characterizes the site and defines the type and extent of contamination.

**Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS):** Two distinct but related studies. They are usually performed at the same time, and together referred to as the "RI/FS." They are intended to:

- Gather the data necessary to determine the type and extent of contamination.
- Establish criteria for cleaning up the site.
- Identify and screen cleanup alternatives for remedial action.
- Analyze in detail the technology and costs of the alternatives.

**Responsiveness Summary:** A summary of oral and/or written public comments received by Ecology during a comment period on key documents, and Ecology's responses to those comments.

**Risk:** The probability that a hazardous substance, when released into the environment, will cause an adverse effect in the exposed humans or living organisms.

**Site:** Any area where a hazardous substance, other than a consumer product in consumer use, has come to be located.