

U.S. Army Yakima Training Center

Comments accepted:

Feb. 6, 2023 – Mar. 22, 2023

Submit comments:

Online:

ecology.wa.gov/YTC-comment

By mail:

Kurt Walker, Site Manager
1250 W. Alder Street
Union Gap, WA 98903
509-934-0386

Site information:

Webpage: ecology.wa.gov/YTC

Facility Site ID: 105
Site Cleanup ID: 2301

See inside for document review locations.

Need help?

Contact Sheila Coughlan
360-480-7127



Translations available

Para ver este [anuncio público en Español](#),¹ visite ecology.wa.gov/YTC.

Documents ready for public review and comment

The Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) is issuing an enforcement order and a corrective action permit to the U.S. Army for the Yakima Training Center (YTC). We would like your input on the following documents:

[Enforcement Order](#)² (EO): The EO requires that the U.S. Army (Army) fully investigate and clean up contaminated areas on the site to meet both state and federal standards. It ensures that the public and Ecology have opportunities to review and comment on the Army's investigation and cleanup activities. As part of the EO, the Army will write the following reports:

- A remedial investigation and feasibility study describing the extent of contamination and comparing cleanup options.
- A draft cleanup action plan that describes the cleanup actions, including a schedule, that will address the contamination at the site.

[Permit for Corrective Action](#):³ The permit for corrective action provides oversight and a regulatory framework regarding dangerous waste activities, including cleanup.

[Public Participation Plan](#):⁴ The public participation plan describes how we will inform the community about site activities and opportunities to engage in the process.

Site background

YTC is a sub-installation of Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM). It's located about 100 air miles east of JBLM and about 10 miles north of Yakima. YTC covers 327,231 acres in Yakima and Kittitas Counties.

YTC is used by visiting soldiers to perform maneuvers and weapons training. Soldiers have been training at YTC since 1941. The center has military and federal government tenants, including the

¹ apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/SummaryPages/2304004ES.html

² apps.ecology.wa.gov/cleanupsearch/document/119818

³ apps.ecology.wa.gov/cleanupsearch/document/121219

⁴ apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/SummaryPages/2304005.html

Washington State Army National Guard and Marine and Army Reserve Centers. No residents or workers live on site. Since 1980, the Army has owned and operated YTC as a dangerous waste management facility that treats, stores, disposes of, or recycles dangerous waste or used oil.

Contamination

Past military and maintenance activities resulted in multiple releases to soil and groundwater. These chemical and toxic waste products include:

- Petroleum-based fuels (gasoline, diesel, and Jet-A).
- Solvents such as trichloroethylene (TCE) and methyl ethyl ketone (MEK).
- Lead-acid batteries from vehicles.
- Ordnance, explosives, and other pyrotechnics, including unused or outdated ammunition and weapons.
- Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) used in fire-fighting foams.

A 1995 facility assessment report identified 115 known or potentially polluted areas within the YTC. Most of these contaminated areas are near the southwest border of the base, near East Selah. By 2013, all the areas had been investigated and over 80 percent had been cleaned up with Ecology oversight. However, there are still more areas to clean up at YTC. These areas do not meet soil or groundwater cleanup standards or have yet to be properly investigated.

From 2018 to 2019, regional Army staff and Ecology spent 18 months negotiating a site cleanup order, before PFAS were included as contaminants. PFAS are known as “emerging” contaminants. We’re learning more about this class of harmful chemicals. The cleanup order, Agreed Order #DE 18125, was available for public comment between August and October of 2020, but it wasn’t finalized because the Army refused to sign that order.

Beginning in 2020, the Army began testing drinking water wells on and around the YTC for PFAS. On-base use of firefighting foams that contain PFAS has contaminated groundwater, including off-base drinking water wells west of the YTC. Currently, the Army is conducting investigations and drinking water mitigation efforts without public review or Ecology oversight.

Next steps

The public comment period is open from February 6 to March 22, 2023. When the comment period ends, we’ll consider all comments. We may change the contents of the documents based on public feedback. After we consider all comments, the documents will become final.

The cleanup process

The Army must clean up the contamination. We apply both the federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) and the state Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) regulations to clean up hazardous waste sites (see Figure 1). The cleanup protects human health and the environment from dangerous wastes and chemicals. We are currently at the initial investigation stage of this process.

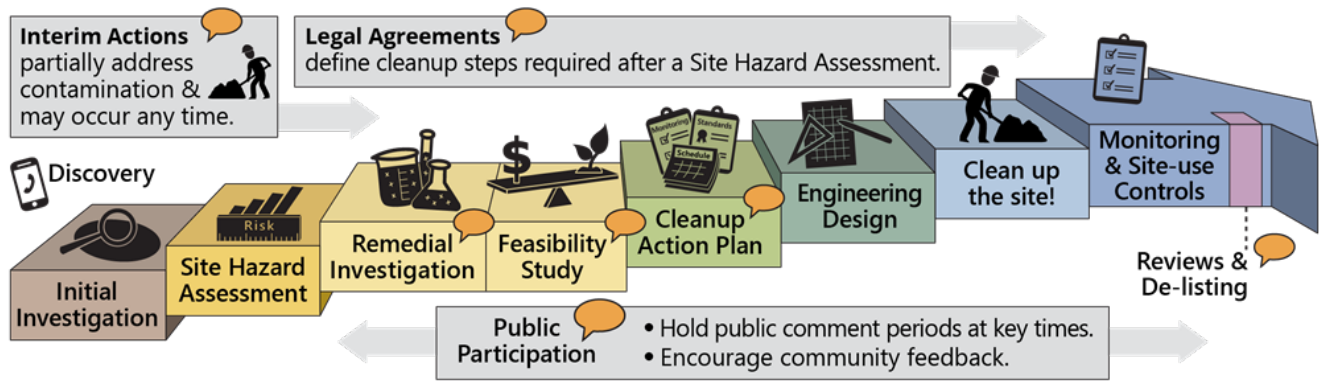


Figure 1: Washington's cleanup process. [Read a plain text version.](#)⁵

What are PFAS?

PFAS is short for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, a class of toxic and long-living chemicals. They are found in fire suppression foam used on oil, gas, and diesel fires, and they can easily contaminate groundwater. PFAS are also used in furniture, carpet, clothing, electronics, and building insulation. Learn more about them at ecology.wa.gov/YTC.

What is an enforcement order?

An enforcement order (EO) is an administrative order requiring cleanup activities. Ecology issues one when we believe a cleanup solution cannot be achieved through negotiation.

Document review locations

In-person document review is available at the following locations:

Washington Department of Ecology
 Central Region Office
 1250 West Alder Street
 Union Gap, WA 98903-0009
 509-575-2490

Yakima Valley Central Library
 102 North 3rd Street
 Yakima, WA 98901
 509-452-8541

To schedule an appointment at Ecology, please contact:

Jacklyn Cooper
 509-208-4591

jacklyn.cooper@ecy.wa.gov

To submit your comments, questions, or concerns about these documents online:

Visit Ecology's eComments page: ecology.wa.gov/YTC-comment.

⁵ <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/parts/1909166part2.pdf>



DEPARTMENT OF
ECOLOGY
State of Washington

Central Region Office
1250 West Alder Street
Union Gap, WA 98903-0009

Public Comment Period



Location of Yakima Training Center (Google map)

Enforcement order and corrective action permit
Ecology seeks public comment on documents issued to the U.S. Army related to hazardous materials released at the Yakima Training Center.

Public comment period
February 6, 2023 – March 22, 2023

Submit a comment
Visit ecology.wa.gov/YTC-comment.

Información en español incluida
El Departamento de Ecología está anunciando el periodo de comentario público relacionado a la limpieza ambiental del sitio U.S. Army Yakima Training Center. Para obtener este documento, o más información sobre este sitio en español, favor de comunicarse con Sheila Coughlan al 360-407-7127 o sheila.coughlan@ecy.wa.gov.

ADA Accessibility: To request an ADA accommodation, contact Ecology by phone at 360-407-6700, email hwtrpubs@ecy.wa.gov, or visit ecology.wa.gov/accessibility. For Relay Service or TTY call 711 or 877-833-6341.