

Yard Program Soil Replacement Sequence Update

Addressing Environmental Health Equity in Cleanup

Summary

The Washington State Department of Ecology's (Ecology) Tacoma Smelter Plume Residential Yard Program is updating the sequence plan for soil replacement in the Tacoma area. The updated sequence plan refers to those properties located in the area shown in green on Figure 1.

The sequence plan determines the order that residential property groups in the Yard Program's Tacoma service area will have their soil replaced. The Yard Program service area in Tacoma is outside the boundary of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) study area (see the blue area in Figure 1).

The 2023 sequence update prioritizes yard soil replacement for people living in the Tacoma service area that may be:

- At higher risk of exposure to arsenic and lead in soil from the former Asarco copper smelter.
- Experiencing higher environmental health disparities than other communities in the area.

Tacoma Smelter Plume

For almost 100 years, the Asarco Company operated a copper smelter in north Tacoma. Air pollution from the smelter settled on the surface soil across the Puget Sound region, including parts of Pierce, King, and Thurston counties. The extent of the contamination is over 1,000 square miles. This area is known as the Tacoma Smelter Plume.

The smelter closed in 1986, however arsenic, lead, and other heavy metals remain in the soil. Areas with the highest levels of arsenic and lead in the soil are in north Tacoma and the southern end of Vashon-Maury Island. These communities are the focus of the Yard Program's service area.

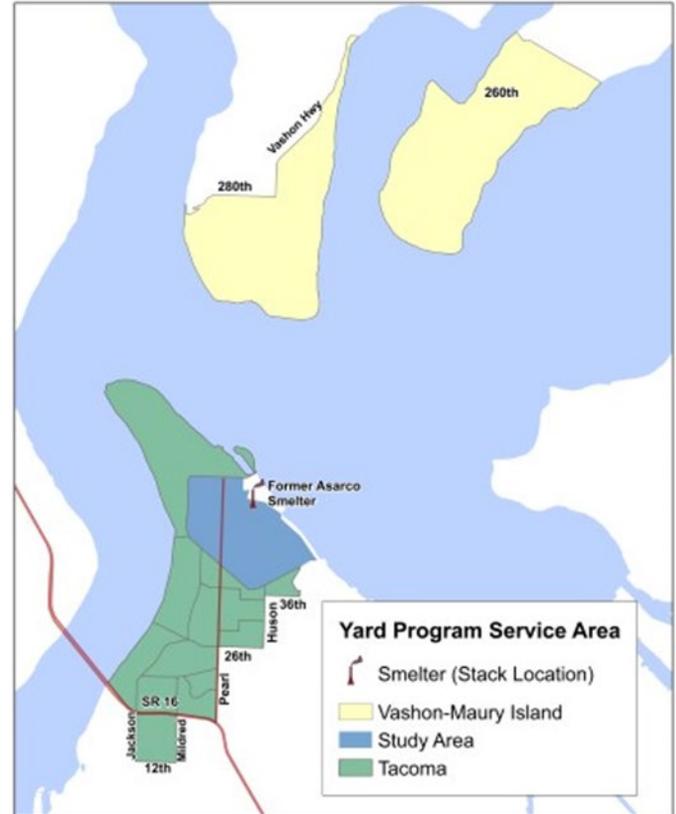


Figure 1. The Yard Program's soil replacement sequence guides cleanup work in the service area. The program's Tacoma service area is shown in green, outside the boundary of EPA's study area. Areas of Vashon-Maury Island (shown in yellow) are part of the Yard Program service area, but not included in this cleanup sequence update. The smelter stack shows where the former Asarco copper smelter was once located in north Tacoma.

Qualify for soil replacement

The Yard Program provides free soil sampling and soil replacement to qualifying properties. To qualify for soil replacement, developed properties within the Yard Program service area must have soil with arsenic or lead levels at or greater than:

- 100 parts per million (ppm) for arsenic
- 500 ppm for lead.

420 properties qualify for soil replacement in the Tacoma service area, outside of EPA's Study Area. Ecology developed the sequence to prioritize the order of cleanup for properties in 2016 and updated the sequence in 2023.

2023 Updated Soil Replacement Sequence

In 2016, the initial cleanup sequence ranked property groups only by the amount of arsenic and lead in the soil. Based on recent discussions with stakeholders, including elected officials and the local health department, we added consideration of environmental health equity to prioritize soil replacement.

Focus on Environmental Justice

Our mission is to protect, preserve, and enhance the environment for current and future generations. To build a healthier environment for all Washingtonians, we ensure no community is overburdened by environmental pollution, and we seek to eliminate environmental health disparities among communities.

To incorporate environmental justice into our sequencing plan for yard replacement, we used information on community environmental health equity from the Washington Tracking Network's Washington Environmental Health Disparities Map.

The map is an interactive tool that evaluates and compares communities based on factors affecting environmental health and equity across all communities in the state. Factors include:

- Environmental exposures
- Environmental effects
- Sensitive populations
- Socioeconomic factors

Soil Replacement Sequence

The Yard Program is dedicated to replacing as much of the smelter contaminated soil in Tacoma neighborhoods as possible. The 2023 sequence update ensures that we prioritize this work in neighborhoods with the highest smelter contamination and where residents experience the greatest environmental health disparities.

The updated sequence to cleanup up yards in the Tacoma service area is shown in Figure 2. The property groups are identified by letters and the order for cleanup is shown by the number in parentheses from one to seven. Cleanup of some groups is already in progress and will be completed

before the next group is started. Many factors impact the timing of our cleanup work. Please contact us if you have any questions about cleanup for your property.

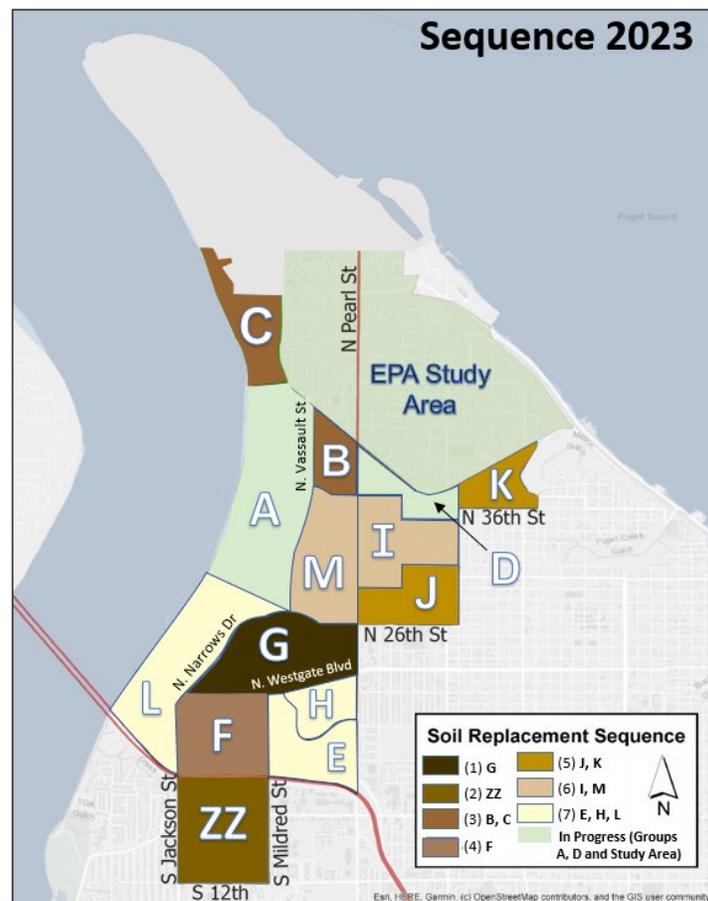


Figure 2. The Yard Program updated the order yard soil will be replaced by property groups in the Tacoma service area, outside of the EPA Study Area. The order is shown by the number from one to seven and the colors from dark to light.

Related Information

- Tacoma Smelter Plume Website <https://ecology.wa.gov/Tacoma-smelter>
- Dirt Alert Map App <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/dirtalert>
- Environmental Health Disparities Map <https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/wtnibl/WTNIBL/>
- Healthy Environment for All (HEAL) Act <https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=70A.02>

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To request an ADA accommodation, contact Ecology by phone at 360-407-6790

or email Justin.Zakoren@ecy.wa.gov,

visit <https://ecy.wa.gov/accessibility>

For Relay Service or TTY, call 711 or 877-833-6341

Yard Program Sequence Update: Informational Meetings

Online using Zoom (May 23, 2023) In-Person at Pt. Defiance Elementary (June 7, 2023)

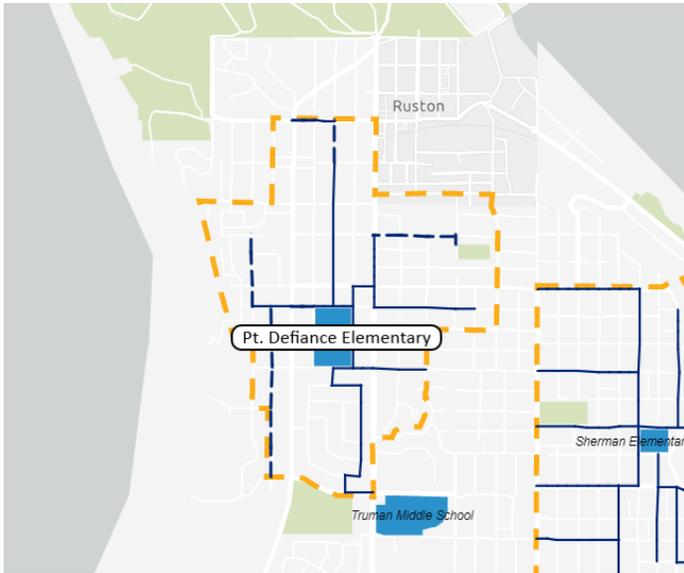


Figure 3. Walking Map and safe walking route suggestions for Point Defiance Elementary from the Tacoma Public Schools. More information can be found at <https://bit.ly/3LG4EKZ>.



Figure 4. Suggested bus routes from Pierce Transit for city bus routes near Point Defiance Elementary. More information can be found at their website at <https://bit.ly/3LcM829>

The Washington State Department of Ecology’s Tacoma Smelter Plume Residential Yard Program is updating the sequence plan for soil replacement in the north Tacoma service area. There are two options to attend for a presentation concerning this update:

<h3 style="margin: 0;">Online using Zoom Informational Meeting</h3> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 0;">May 23, 2023 2:00 – 3:30 pm</p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 0;">Join online or using a phone from our Ecology webpage: https://ecology.wa.gov/TSP-soil</p>	<h3 style="margin: 0;">In-person Informational Meeting</h3> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 0;">June 7, 2023 6:00 – 7:30 pm</p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 0;">Point Defiance Elementary in the school cafeteria 4330 North Visscher Street, Tacoma, WA 98407</p>
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Toxics Cleanup Program
PO Box 47775
Olympia, WA 98504-7775

Yard Program Sequence Update: Online and In-Person Informational Meetings

The Washington State Department of Ecology's Tacoma Smelter Plume Residential Yard Program is updating the sequence plan for soil replacement in the north Tacoma service area. Join us for a presentation on this update.

Online Informational Meeting using Zoom

May 23, 2023

2:00 – 3:30 pm

- Join online or via phone from our website at <https://ecology.wa.gov/TSP-soil>

In-person Informational Meeting

June 7, 2023

6:00 – 7:30 pm

- Point Defiance Elementary – Cafeteria
4330 North Visscher Street,
Tacoma, WA 98407

Translations available:

Để đọc thông tin này bằng tiếng Việt, vui lòng truy cập trang mạng của chúng tôi tại: <https://ecology.wa.gov/TSP-soil>

要閱讀中文郵件，請訪問我們的網站: <https://ecology.wa.gov/TSP-soil>

이 우편물의 한국어 버전을 보시려면 다음 웹사이트를 방문하세요: <https://ecology.wa.gov/TSP-soil>

Para leer este anuncio en español, visite nuestro sitio web en: <https://ecology.wa.gov/TSP-soil>

Чтобы прочитать эту рассылку на русском языке, посетите наш веб-сайт по адресу: <https://ecology.wa.gov/TSP-soil>