

# Walla Walla gasoline spill and cleanup

## Stillwater Holdings Chevron cleanup site: March 2025 update



### New equipment installed

On March 7, NWFF Environmental began installing more efficient equipment at the Chevron property to continue protecting the community. Clean Harbors is officially transferring mitigation operations to NWFF Environmental and the transition is nearly complete, with the 106 Building transition yet to be completed.

Next, Ecology will focus on contracting for the underground storage tank removal and begin the remedial investigation and feasibility study. The investigation and feasibility study will inform how we approach long term cleanup at the site.

### Sampling scheduled

GeoEngineers is tentatively scheduled to complete another round of groundwater sampling this month.

The sump water sample collected from the Marcus Whitman Hotel in November was below cleanup/discharge levels, while samples collected from the sump at the 106 Building showed that concentrations of petroleum contaminants continue to exceed cleanup levels. Groundwater samples from wells on and adjacent to the Chevron property were also above cleanup levels, although overall there appears to be a decline in concentration.

### Stillwater Holdings noncompliance

Stillwater Holdings has resumed fuel sales without our approval, which carries risk. Ecology is waiting on the Department of Revenue and the Office of Insurance Commissioner to provide clarification on an issue associated with the insurance provider. If the policy is inadequate, we will shut the fuel sales down.

Stillwater Holdings has been cooperative and communitive throughout the installation of the new mitigation equipment and are working towards compliance on the enforcement order issued in June 2024 and the amended enforcement order issued in Aug. 2024. The first deliverable required from Stillwater Holdings under the enforcement order is a comprehensive schedule and a remedial investigation work plan, which has not been submitted to Ecology yet.

### Site history

The emergency response and cleanup operations in downtown Walla Walla began in September 2023, when Ecology spills staff responded to gasoline odors in the basement of the Marcus Whitman Hotel. Air quality testing identified potentially harmful and explosive gasoline vapors in the basement. The hotel was evacuated immediately. Vapors were also detected in two nearby buildings.

For the next month, ventilation was required to reduce dangerous vapors, and gasoline-contaminated groundwater was pumped from the affected buildings. By October 2023, the threat to the community was reduced, allowing efforts to shift from emergency response to developing a mitigation plan that would ensure the continued safety of nearby residents and businesses.

Based on sampling results, Stillwater Holdings Chevron was identified as the source of the release. Contamination from the spill continues to impact two neighboring properties, the Marcus Whitman Hotel and the 106 Building.

## Questions?

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