

# Gas Works Sediment Area



## Draft agreed order available for public review and comment

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) has prepared this fact sheet to invite public comment on a draft *agreed order* (site cleanup terms in italics are defined in the "Cleanup Terms" box on page 4) and *public participation plan* for the sediment area located off-shore from Gas Works Park, in Lake Union, Seattle, Washington. The agreed order is between Ecology, the City of Seattle (City) and Puget Sound Energy (PSE).

The agreed order requires that the City and PSE complete a *remedial investigation (RI)* for the submerged shoreland and lakebed sediments in the area of Lake Union adjacent to Gas Works Park (see figure on page 3). The study will determine the nature and extent of contamination in this area. The agreed order also requires that a *feasibility study (FS)* be completed to evaluate cleanup alternatives.

The Public Participation Plan outlines outreach tools and identifies opportunities for the community to become involved

You are encouraged to review and comment on these documents between **March 18 and April 16, 2005.**

### Public Meeting Scheduled:

**March 31, 2005**  
**St Benedict School (Auditorium)**  
**Wallingford Avenue N, Seattle**  
**7:00 pm – 9:00 pm**  
**(details on page 2)**

### Location

The area of investigation covered under this agreed order is adjacent to Gas Works Park in Lake Union (see figure). At this time, the Gas Works Sediment Area has no defined site boundary. It includes the underwater sediments that contain hazardous substances, including polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), that are associated with historical activities on the uplands area of Gas Works Park.

The proposed work under the current agreed order will be managed as two side-by-side study areas, the Eastern and Western Study Areas. The Eastern Study Area *RI/FS* will be completed by Puget Sound Energy. The City of Seattle will complete the *RI/FS* for the Western Study Area. The City and PSE will coordinate investigation work and jointly review documents prior to submittal to Ecology.

### Site Background

Gas Works Park is a 20-acre park located at 2101 North Northlake Way. The park juts into Lake Union (the lake lies to the east, west and south of the park) The Park's north end is bounded by Northlake Way.

From the early 1900s until 1956, gas companies operated a plant at the site that converted coal and oil into manufactured gas. The American Tar Company operated nearby, refining coal tar obtained as a by-product of the gas manufacturing process, and producing coal tar-based products.

## March 2005

**Public Comment Period:**  
**March 18 - April 16, 2005**

### Technical questions and written comments:

John Keeling, Site Manager  
WA Department of Ecology  
3190 160th Avenue SE  
Bellevue, WA 98008  
(425) 649-7052  
Email: [jkee461@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:jkee461@ecy.wa.gov)

### For all other questions contact:

Justine Asohmbom  
Public Involvement Coordinator  
WA Department of Ecology  
3190 160th Avenue SE  
Bellevue, WA 98008  
(425) 649-7135  
Email: [juas461@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:juas461@ecy.wa.gov)

### Documents can be reviewed at the following locations:

Seattle Public Library - Wallingford  
1501 North 45th Street, Seattle

Seattle Public Library- Fremont  
731 North 35th Street, Seattle

Fremont Neighborhood Services Ctr.  
908 North 34th Street, Seattle

Seattle Public Library- Central  
1000 4th Avenue, 5th Floor, Seattle

WA Department of Ecology  
Northwest Regional Office  
3190 160th Avenue SE  
Bellevue, WA 98008  
(425) 649-7190  
(Call for an appointment)

Ecology's Web Site:  
[http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/sites\\_information.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/sites_information.html)

After the gas plant was closed in 1956, the site was used for equipment storage by PSE. In 1962, the City of Seattle purchased the property. By the mid-1970s, most of the old equipment was removed, park landforms were created, and by-products of the original gas plant were covered with soil. In 1976, the park was opened to the public.

Subsequent investigative work on the uplands area and adjoining Lake Union sediments demonstrated that leaks and by-products from the gas works and tar refinery contaminated the soil and groundwater of the park, as well as adjacent sediments in Lake Union.

In 1984, site investigations for the Gas Works Park uplands area identified several contaminants including petroleum compounds, PAHs and benzene. The park was temporarily closed during an investigation into risks to park visitors. The park was later re-opened after it was determined that no significant health risks existed as long as park visitors did not come into contact with soil in the park or wade, swim or fish in adjacent Lake Union. Cleanup work took place between November 2000 and June 2001, and monitoring continues.

### **Overview of Sediment Investigations**

Lake Union has been strongly influenced by human activity. Due to the historical urban uses of the lake and its shores, contamination is attributed to a variety of sources. They include industrial and commercial activities on the uplands, in-water and over water operations that have resulted in spills and leaks, shoreline extension, stormwater discharges, waste water disposal, and other discharges to the lake.

From the early 1960s to 2002, many public and private entities carried out investigations offshore of Gas Works Park in Lake Union. Some of these studies are strictly related to water quality and others include both water quality and sediment sampling.

Sediment investigations to date have indicated high levels of (PAHs), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), arsenic, lead and other metals. The RI/FS to be conducted will further determine the nature and extent of contamination and evaluate cleanup options.

### **Public Comment and Public Meeting on the Draft Agreed Order & Public Participation Plan**

Ecology is holding a public comment period from **March 18 through April 16, 2005**, during which you may comment on the draft agreed order and public participation plan. These draft documents are available at

the information repositories listed on the first page of this fact sheet.

Ecology will also host a public meeting during this comment period to present information and answer questions that you may have.

#### **You are invited to a Public Meeting!**

**Date: March 31, 2005**

**Location: St Benedict School (Auditorium)  
4811 Wallingford Avenue No  
Seattle, WA 98103**

**Time: 7.00 pm -9.00 pm**

To enable the City and PSE begin in-water work during a period that the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife has recommended to be protective of fish migration, Ecology will sign the draft agreed order and approve the plans for additional sediment investigations at the beginning of this comment period. However, comments received during this comment period will be considered in future decisions regarding the site investigations and cleanup of the sediments.

### **What Happens Next?**

Once the public comment period ends, Ecology will review all comments received and will make recommendations for any suggested changes. If no significant changes are made, the agreed order will be considered final and the site investigations will continue. If significant changes are made to the agreed order, an additional public comment period will be held. You will have future opportunities to review and comment on draft reports regarding the extent of contamination, cleanup options, and any cleanup plans for the site.

### **Ecology would like your input!**

You have an opportunity to review and provide comments on the draft agreed order and public participation plan for the Gas Works Sediment Area. Please send your comments before **April 16, 2005**, to Ecology's Site Manager, John Keeling, at the address in the box on the first page of this fact sheet. Comments may be sent by mail or e-mail and should include "Gas Works Sediment Area" in the subject line.

For information about other Ecology public comment periods, meetings, hearings, workshops, and open houses, please visit Ecology's public events calendar at: <http://apps.ecy.wa.gov/pubcalendar/calendar.asp>. Read Frequently Asked Questions about Effective Public Commenting at this link to learn more about the public comment process.



## Cleanup Terms

An *Agreed Order* is a legal agreement between Ecology and a *potentially liable person* to conduct work toward a cleanup.

*Feasibility studies* develop and evaluate cleanup options for a given site.

A *potentially liable person (PLP)* is defined as any individual(s) or company(s) potentially responsible for, or contributing to, the contamination problems at a site. Whenever possible, Ecology requires these PLPs, through administrative and legal actions, to clean up hazardous waste sites for which they may be liable.

A *Remedial Investigation* is used to characterize the site and define the extent of contamination.

A *Public Participation Plan* is a plan prepared to encourage coordinated and effective public involvement designed to the public's needs at a particular site.

A *Cleanup Action Plan* describes the cleanup alternative(s) that will be used at the site

*Sediments* are settled particles located at the bottom of a lake, river, or in wetlands.



3190 160th Avenue SE  
Bellevue, WA 98008-5452

### **Gas Works Sediment Area**

Ecology Seeks Public Comment  
on Agreed Order

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Public Comment Period  
**March 18 – April 16, 2005**