



Responsiveness Summary

0 Comments Received

Tacoma Port Earley Business Center

Cleanup Site ID: 2395

Facility ID: 9762715

Address: 401 East Alexander Ave, Tacoma WA

County: Pierce

This report was prepared by:

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Toxics Cleanup Program

Southwest Region Office

Lacey, Washington

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2025 Interim Action Plan Public Comment Period

Ecology held a public comment period from July 17 to August 18, 2025, on two documents, including the:

1. **Proposed Interim Action Plan:** This plan has background information about the site, a design of the proposed cleanup, and the next steps.
2. **State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Determination of Non-Significance:** Ecology determined the proposed cleanup is not likely to cause significant environmental harm. We considered environmental, historical, and cultural factors in this process.

We received no comments. Ecology finalized the Interim Action Plan. The Port of Tacoma will complete the cleanup actions as outlined in the Interim Action Plan. A comprehensive cleanup plan addressing all contamination at the site is still in development. Once ready, we will share the plan for public review and comment.

Finalized documents and more information can be found on Ecology's [Tacoma Port Earley Business Center](https://go.ecology.wa.gov/2395)¹ website.



Figure 1: Map of the Tacoma Port Earley Business Center cleanup site.

¹ <https://go.ecology.wa.gov/2395>

Appendices

Appendix A: Summary of Outreach

Fact Sheet

- **Mailed Notices:** Ecology mailed a printed fact sheet with a summary of the cleanup and comment period to about 314 nearby addresses, including homes and businesses.
- **Email Updates:** The same information was emailed to individuals who requested updates related to this cleanup site.
 - To receive future updates:
 - Contact Sandy Smith at: Sandy.Smith@ecy.wa.gov, and/or
 - Subscribe to the cleanup site at Ecology's [Tacoma Port Earley Business Center](#)² cleanup website.
- **Online Access:** The fact sheet was also posted on Ecology's [Tacoma Port Earley Business Center](#).³

Site Register

Ecology published **two notices** in its *Contaminated Site Register*:

- Contaminated Site Register for – July 24, 2025
- Contaminated Site Register for – August 7, 2025

You can find these notices and download PDFs on the [Ecology Site Register webpage](#).⁴

Websites

- Ecology updated its Tacoma Port Earley Business Center cleanup website. This update included:
 - Information about the public comment period.
 - Posting the outreach fact sheet, draft Interim Action Plan, and SEPA documents.
- These materials were also listed on Ecology's [Public Inputs & Events webpage](#).⁵

Document Repositories

Printed copies of the documents were available for public review at:

- **Tacoma Public Library - Main Branch**
 - Address: 1102 Tacoma Avenue South Tacoma, WA 98402
 - Phone: 253-280-2800
- **Ecology Lacey Office** (by appointment)
 - Address: 300 Desmond Drive SE, Lacey, WA 98503
 - Phone: 360-407-6365

² <https://go.ecology.wa.gov/2395>

³ <https://go.ecology.wa.gov/2395>

⁴ <https://ecology.wa.gov/regulations-permits/guidance-technical-assistance/site-register-lists-and-data>

⁵ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Events/Search/Listing>

Appendix B: Overview of the Cleanup Site

Background

Back in the 1910s, the higher (upland) part of the property was created by filling in what used to be tidal flats. During both World War I and World War II, the site was used as a Naval shipyard. Ships were built along docks adjacent to the shoreline, while the upland areas were used for support work. Around 1960, the Port of Tacoma bought the property. Since then, the site has been used by various industries. The Port is planning to redevelop the site to update it for modern marine-related industries. The area is zoned for industrial use and will be for the foreseeable future.



Figure 2: Aerial photo of the site and surroundings taken in 1950.

Contamination Concerns

This interim action focuses on cleaning up **petroleum-based contamination** that comes from fuels such as gasoline, diesel, and heating oil. The source of this contamination is likely past spills and leaks from **underground storage tanks (USTs)** that were installed and used during shipyard operations. Four of these USTs remain on the property and will be removed as part of the interim action. This contamination is present in soil and groundwater at levels higher than what state safety standards allow. They must be cleaned up to protect both people and the environment.

There are four USTs still in place at the site. These USTs have been there for decades and may have started to corrode. Removing the tanks and nearby contaminated soil as soon as possible will prevent future leaks and further contamination.

Part of the cleanup will also target nearby petroleum hydrocarbon contamination referred to as the **LNAPL (Light Non-Aqueous Phase Liquid)** source area. This contamination likely came from nearby heating oil USTs that were removed in the past. LNAPL is contaminating the groundwater at the site. LNAPL doesn't mix with water and 'floats' on the surface of the groundwater.



Figure 3: Non-Aqueous Phase Liquid. Photo credit to Edublogs.org 2017.