

Tacoma Coal Gasification



SHARP Report — Part 1 of 2

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• SHARP first SHARP		v2024.04.29	Ecology Info	
• SHARP rating	Critical		ERTS	none
• SHARP date	09/26/2025		CSID	3675
• EJFlagged?	✓ – No Override		FSID	1249
• LD confidence level	low		VCP	none
• Cleanup milestone	remedial investigation		UST ID	none
• SHARPster	Sandy Smith		LUST ID	none

This section is blank if this is the first SHARP	

SHARP Media	Scores	Confidence	Additional Factors	
Indoor air	D4	high	multiple chemical types	✓
Groundwater	C1	high	risk to off-site people	⊘
Surface water	A4	medium	climate change impacts	✓
Sediment	A1	medium	plant/animal tissue data	⊘
Soil	A1	high		

Location and land use info	
No address on file, Tacoma, Pierce County, 98402	
Primary parcel	2022000021
Land use	recreational
Responsible unit	SWRO

Sources reviewed
Ecology Review Draft Revised Remedial Investigation Report, Dalton Olmstead Fuglevand, April 30, 2025

Primary census tract	Associated census tracts
53053060200	53053061602

Local demographics comments

no comments

Source/source area description

The Tacoma Coal Gasification Site is located on a west facing slope near the head of the Thea Foss Waterway in Tacoma. A manufactured gas plant (MGP) previously operated on the site from approximately 1885 to 1924. Most of the former MGP footprint is covered by the elevated Interstate 705 roadway and State Route 509 interchanges, including buried footings, piers, embankments, and retaining walls associated with the roadways. Burlington Northern-Santa Fe (BNSF) rail tracks and Dock Street are located east of I-705. A portion of the George Weyerhaeuser Park is located within the east portion of the site along the Thea Foss Waterway shoreline. The primary manufacturing area of the MGP was remediated by Washington State Department of Transportation during construction of the roadways.

Soil comments

Soil COPCs include BTEX, PAHs, cPAHs, cyanide, antimony, arsenic, lead, manganese, petroleum hydrocarbons, and dibenzofuran.

Groundwater comments

Groundwater COPCs include BTEX, PAHs, cPAHs, cyanide, arsenic, manganese, petroleum hydrocarbons, and dibenzofuran.

Surface water comments

The Thea Foss Waterway, part of the Commencement Bay Nearshore Tidelands Superfund site, is adjacent to the site. Groundwater seep samples collected near the site at low tide did not contain concentrations of COPCs exceeding MTCA criteria; however, DNAPL is present beneath sediment in the head of the waterway. Some storm drains that were a previous contaminant transport pathway from the site to the waterway have been sealed. Onsite sanitary sewer corridor does not appear to be a transport pathway for site contaminants through the nearby overflow.

Sediment comments

The site is adjacent to the Thea Foss Waterway. Sediment in head of the waterway was remediated around 2004 by containing NAPL ebullition at one location with an HDPE cover, capping the head of the waterway with 3 feet of sediment, and placing armor to protect the cap from erosion by discharge from the nearby twin 96-inch storm sewers. No information suggests that Tacoma Coal Gasification is an ongoing substantial contributor to sediment recontamination in the head of the waterway. DNAPL is present beneath the sediment in the head of the waterway.

Indoor air comments

There are no substantial buildings on the site. There is a bathroom facility nearby at the George Weyerhaeuser Park.

Additional factors comments

Site is adjacent to the Thea Foss Waterway of Commencement Bay.

Site history

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The MGP produced gas that was piped to customers and used for lighting, heating, and cooking. Manufactured gas was produced at the plant using the coal carbonization process until approximately 1909, when the carbureted water gas process was added. Both coal gas and carbureted water gas were manufactured between approximately 1909 and 1924. During that time, The original plant included one gas holder, and associated structures. By 1892, a second gas holder had been constructed. By 1896, two gas holders, a building with retorts, a building with purifiers, a tar pump, a coal house, and another piece of equipment related to tar were present. By 1912, the facility had been remodeled from that constructed in 1896 and included two gas holders with different buildings for retorts, purifiers, and coal and coke storage. There was also an ammonia plant, cinder bins, office, generator house, and a third gas holder. Three fuel oil storage tanks were constructed near the waterway after 1912.

Overflow - Site contamination and cleanup history

No overflow

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First SHARP

SHARP rating — Critical

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Conceptual site model

09/26/2025



Assessment scores by environmental medium

