

Frequently Asked Questions

Toxics Cleanup Program

March 2008

Lead Pollution from Home Lead Melting at 6719 South “D” Street, Tacoma

Recently, the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) and the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department (Health Department) became aware of lead pollution from a home lead melting operation at **6719 South “D” Street** in Tacoma. Lead is a toxic metal that can cause health problems to children and adults.

Q: What happened at 6719 South “D” Street?

A: For about twenty-three years, the property owner used the driveway and carport area to melt scrap lead to make fishing weights and other lead-based products. Fumes from this process spread lead across the property and possibly onto neighboring properties.

(Please see page 2 for more information about lead and how to keep your family safe from contact with lead.)

Q: What are the Health Department and Ecology doing about this issue?

A: Health Department staff will be visiting property owners in the area to offer free soil lead testing. Please contact Glenn Rollins at 253.798.3503 if you have any questions about soil lead testing. The health department can also assist with free blood lead testing. For blood lead testing, please contact Lindsay Spencer at 253.798.4783.

Ecology will work with the owner of 6719 South “D” Street to put a fence around the property. Soil lead test results from this property and neighboring properties will help Ecology decide how to clean up the lead pollution. Ecology has funding available to clean up lead pollution on neighboring properties where families may be exposed. The goal is to protect both human health and the environment.

DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

Lead cleanup contact:

Marian Abbett, P.E.
Toxics Cleanup Program
360.407.6257
Mabb461@ecy.wa.gov

Brochures on how to sample your own yard for lead:

http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/dirt_alert/other_info/brochures.htm



General information:

Frank DiBiase
253.798.7674
Fdibiase@tpchd.org

Soil testing information:

Glenn Rollins
253.798.3503
Grollins@tpchd.org

Children's blood lead testing:

Lindsay Spencer
253.798.4783
Lspencer@tpchd.org

Special accommodations:

If you need this publication in an alternate format, call 360-407-6300. Persons with hearing loss, call 711 for Washington Relay Service. Persons with a speech disability, call 877-833-6341.

Q: Will my soil be tested?

A: The Health Department is asking for property owners' permission to test soils on lots on:

- The block of 6719 South "D" Street.
- The street facing 6719 South "D" Street.

Based on the first set of results, the Health Department may contact more property owners about soil lead testing. The testing is voluntary.

Q: Where can I find more information about lead and its health effects?

A: Please visit the Health Department's lead Web site at: <http://www.tpchd.org/lead>.

Q: What can I do to stay safe from lead?

A: There are simple things you and your family can do to decrease contact with dirt that may contain lead and other harmful chemicals. These actions include:



Using plenty of soap and water

- Wash your hands and face before eating and after working or playing in soil. Use a scrub brush to clean dirt under your nails.
- Scrub fruits and vegetables before you eat them, to remove any dirt.
- Wash children's toys, bedding and pacifiers often.



Mopping, Dusting, and Vacuuming

- Remove shoes before entering the house. Place a "wipe-off" mat outside entrances.
- Use a damp cloth for dusting and mopping at least once a week.
- Vacuum several times a week. Use a bag designed to filter "allergens" or a HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Arrestor) filter. Change the bag monthly.

Maintaining Your Grounds - Cover bare patches of soil with a ground cover like grass, gravel, wood chips, or mulch. Maintain painted surfaces. Lead-based paint may have been used on homes built before 1978. When the paint chips or chalks, it becomes a source of lead exposure.

Keeping Pets Clean - Pets can track dirt inside your home. Wipe off their fur and paws before they come indoors. Brush and bathe pets regularly.

Eating a Healthy Diet - Eat foods that contain the daily-recommended amounts of iron and calcium to help to keep your body from absorbing lead. Prevent children from eating dirt.