



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

**Whitney's Chevrolet
123 Pioneer Avenue, Montesano, WA**

Washington State Department of Ecology
Southwest Regional Office
Toxics Cleanup Program
300 Desmond Drive
Olympia, Washington 98504-7775

September 2009

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INTRODUCTION

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) has developed this public participation plan pursuant to the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) and Agreed Order No. DE 2951 to promote meaningful community involvement during the investigation and cleanup of Whitney's Chevrolet Site. This plan outlines and describes the tools that Ecology uses to inform the public about Site activities and identifies opportunities for the community to become involved.

SITE BACKGROUND

The business run by Whitney's Chevrolet, Inc. used to store and sell gasoline at 123 W. Pioneer Avenue. In 1995, they had three underground storage tanks removed. Soil samples taken from the pit where the tanks sat showed high levels of benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, and xylene (BTEX).

In 2003, Ecology found that waste solvents and waste oil were being put into fuel storage tanks. The tanks were then decommissioned and cleaned. However, solvents were found in groundwater on the Sterling Savings Bank property next door.

In 2005, Ecology found gasoline range hydrocarbons and VOCs in both soil and groundwater samples. These samples were taken on and around the Whitney's Chevrolet property and were part of a larger investigation in downtown Montesano.

A fall 2005 Site Hazard Assessment (SHA) reviewed past land use, sampling results, and other site information. Based on this SHA, the site was ranked 3 (on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being the highest risk) and Ecology decided that the PLPs should begin a formal cleanup under the Model Toxics Control Act (Chapter 70.105D RCW).

In 2006, Ecology entered into an Agreed Order with Whitney's Chevrolet, Inc., Caldwell Family Holdings, LLC and Wynochee Lodge #42 F&AM to begin the cleanup process. The agreement required them to remove leaking underground fuel storage tanks and determine the nature and extent of contamination. They would then have to evaluate cleanup options (Feasibility Study) and draft a Cleanup Action Plan.

MODEL TOXICS CONTROL ACT CLEANUP STAGES

The Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) defines each stage of the cleanup process to protect human health and the environment. Figure 2 on page 8 details these stages.

As part of the MTCA cleanup process, Ecology will often enter into a legal agreement with the parties responsible for cleanup of the pollution. These agreements are called "agreed orders" or "consent decrees." In addition to the steps in the chart, "interim actions" may be taken during steps 1 through 5 (the investigation) to reduce or eliminate pollution that poses an immediate threat to human health or the environment.

The cleanup process is complex. Issues often arise that require more attention or evaluation, and may lead to changes in the steps or schedule. Every effort will be made to keep the public well-informed of changes.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACTIVITIES

The purpose of this Public Participation Plan is to promote public understanding and participation in the MTCA activities planned for this Site. This section of the plan addresses how Ecology will share information and receive public comments and community input on the Site activities.

Public Involvement Activities

Ecology uses a variety of activities to facilitate public participation in the investigation and cleanup of MTCA Sites. The following is a list of the public involvement activities that Ecology will use, their purposes, and descriptions of when and how they will be used during this Site cleanup.

Formal Public Comment Periods

Comment periods are the primary method Ecology uses to get feedback from the public on proposed cleanup decisions. Comment periods usually last 30 days and are required under WAC 173-340-600 at certain points during the investigation and cleanup process. See Figure 2 for an outline of cleanup process and information about comment periods.

During a comment period, the public can comment in writing. Verbal comments are taken if a public hearing is held. After formal comment periods, Ecology reviews all comments received and may respond in a document called a Responsiveness Summary.

Ecology will consider the need for changes or revisions based on input from the public. If significant changes are made, then a second comment period may be held. If no significant changes are made, then the draft document(s) will be finalized.

Public comment periods will be held for draft remedial investigation/feasibility study reports, draft cleanup action plans, future agreed orders or consent decrees that are developed for the Site.

Public Meetings and Hearings

Public meetings may be held during the investigation and cleanup process as required by WAC 173-340-600. Ecology also may offer public meetings for actions expected to be of particular interest to the community. These meetings will be held at locations convenient to the community. If 10 or more people request a public meeting, one will be scheduled. Otherwise, meetings will be scheduled as needed.

Information Repositories

Information repositories are places where the public may read and review Site information, including documents that are the subject of public comment. Ecology has established three repositories for the Whitney's Chevrolet cleanup project. Documents available for public review and comment can be found here:

- Washington State Department of Ecology, Southwest Regional Office, 300 Desmond Drive, Lacey, WA 98516. Please call (360) 407-6045 for an appointment.
- W.H. Abel Library, 7125 Main Street South, Montesano, WA 98563. Phone: (360) 249-4211
- Montesano City Hall, 112 North Main Street, Montesano, WA 98563. Phone: (360) 249-3939
- Ecology's Web Site, http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/whitneys/whitneys_hp.htm

Site Register

Ecology's Toxics Cleanup Program uses its bimonthly *Site Register* to announce all of its public meetings and comment periods, as well as many other activities. To receive the *Site Register* in electronic or hard copy format, contact Linda Thompson at (360) 407-6069 or by e-mail at Ltho461@ecy.wa.gov. It is also available on Ecology's web Site at http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/pub_inv/pub_inv2.html

Mailing List

Ecology has compiled a mailing list for the Site. The list includes individuals, groups, public agencies, elected officials, private businesses, potentially affected parties, and other known interested parties. The list will be maintained at Ecology's Southwest Regional Office and will be updated as needed.

Please contact Meg Bommarito at (360) 407-6255 or mbom461@ecy.wa.gov if you would like to have your address added to or deleted from this mailing list.

Fact Sheets

Ecology will mail fact sheets to persons and organizations interested in the Whitney's Chevrolet cleanup project to inform them of public meetings and comment opportunities and important Site activities. Ecology also may mail fact sheets about the progress of Site activities.

Newspaper Display Ads

Ecology may place ads in *The Daily World* and/or the *Vidette* to announce public comment periods and public meetings or hearings for the Site.

Plan Update

This public participation plan may be updated as the project proceeds. If an update is necessary, and constitutes a substantial change in the plan, it will be announced via site register and the web site.

Public Participation Grants

As part of the Model Toxics Control Act, Ecology developed a public participation grant program to promote public participation during cleanups. Public Participation Grants provide funding to community groups to help involve the public in the investigation and cleanup of contaminated properties. The grants also help develop and carry out programs that promote the state's solid or hazardous waste management priorities.

For cleanup sites, non-profit groups or groups of three or more unrelated individuals can apply for grants to fund outreach and education efforts for the community that is impacted by the cleanup. Past projects have helped people understand the cleanup and how to comment on cleanup proposals during public comment periods. Grant funds may be used to pay for technical experts who help people understand cleanup issues. They can also be used to hold meetings, workshops and other events that help to inform people. In addition, printing and distribution of reports, brochures and other materials may be covered.

For more information about this grant program, visit <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/swfa/grants/ppg.html>.

Points of Contact

If you have questions or need more information about this plan or the Whitney's Chevrolet cleanup project, please contact the following:

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Figure 1. Whitney's Chevrolet Site location.

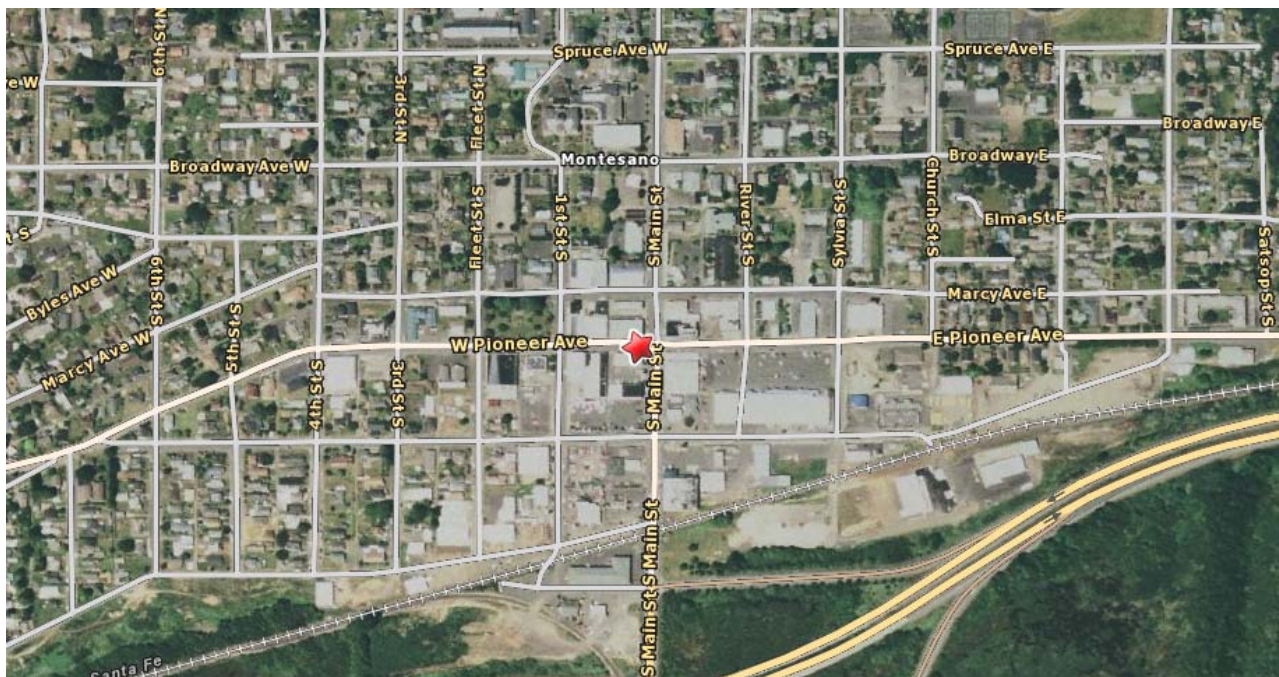


Figure 2. Steps in the Model Toxics Control Act Cleanup Process.

