

DEPARTMENT OF
ECOLOGY
State of Washington

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

USG Highway 99 Site

**7110 Pacific Highway East
Milton, Washington**

Prepared by
Washington State Department of Ecology
Southwest Regional Office
Toxics Cleanup Program
PO Box 47775
Olympia, Washington 98504-7775

July / 2009

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INTRODUCTION

Department of Ecology has developed this public participation plan to promote meaningful community involvement during the investigation and cleanup of the USG Highway 99 site. This plan describes the tools that Ecology uses to inform the public about site activities and identify opportunities for the community involvement.

Ecology has negotiated an Agreed Order (legal agreement) with USG (formerly U.S. Gypsum Company). The Agreed Order requires USG to:

- Investigate the nature and extent of pollution at the site.
- Evaluate possible cleanup options; and
- Propose a cleanup of the site which meets state standards under the Model Toxics Control Act (RCW 70.105D).

LOCATION AND SITE BACKGROUND

The USG Highway 99 site is located at 7110 Pacific Highway East, in Milton. It sits next to and on the banks of the Hylebos Creek, near where the creek flows into the Hylebos Waterway and into Puget Sound. The site is defined by the extent of contamination.

Site Background

Before 1985, USG used the site for disposing of waste from their rock wool manufacturing plant in Tacoma. Rock wool is made from blowing air through molten rock, which produces a mass of fine fibers. These fibers are used as insulation and fire-proofing. The process of making rock wool produces wastes called “bag house dust” and “shot”. Bag house dust is collected by filters inside a facility. Shot is material left over from melting the rock. Both of these wastes contain arsenic, which has contaminated the site. The arsenic came from slag, a waste material from the former Asarco smelter in North Tacoma, which was used to make rock wool.

From 1985-1986, USG voluntarily dug up and removed bag house dust and shot from the site and disposed of it at a hazardous waste landfill. Ecology required USG to monitor the groundwater after the cleanup. USG has submitted groundwater monitoring reports on an intermittent basis. In 2007, Ecology received a report from USG that showed arsenic contamination of soil and groundwater. USG is now a Potentially Liable Party (PLP) for the cleanup of the site.

Description of Contamination

The 2007 report states that nine soil borings and nine groundwater samples were taken from the site. The highest soil arsenic concentration was 1,400 milligrams per kilogram (mg/kg). The highest groundwater arsenic concentration was 30,000 micrograms per liter (ug/l). Eight of the nine soil samples and all nine groundwater samples exceeded the state cleanup levels for soil (20 mg/kg) and for groundwater (5 µg/l). Arsenic is likely being released into the Hylebos Creek and may threaten both human health and the environment.

Cleanup Activities

Cleanup activities at the USG Highway 99 site fall under Washington’s Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA). MTCA has procedures for the cleanup of contaminated sites to standards that are safe for both human health and the environment. Ecology is responsible for implementing and enforcing MTCA.

USG is required to complete a Remedial Investigation, Feasibility Study, and draft Cleanup Action Plan (CAP). The RI report describes the nature and extent of contamination on the site and the FS examines possible cleanup options. The draft CAP selects a cleanup action. The final CAP will be an Ecology document.

For more information about MTCA and the cleanup process, please visit Ecology's Web site at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/biblio/ftc94129.html>.

SITE CLEANUP PROCESS

Toxic sites are cleaned up in stages, described below. Each stage has a related report or plan that the public is welcome to review and comment on.

Remedial Investigation & Feasibility Study (RI/FS) - The RI/FS looks at the extent and type of pollution on the site. It is used to evaluate possible human health and environmental impacts, and to find cleanup alternatives.

Interim Actions - Ecology may sometimes take Interim Actions to partially clean up a site before the final cleanup plan is complete. *If Ecology decides to do interim cleanup, those plans would be made available for public comment.*

Cleanup Action Plan (CAP) - The CAP describes the cleanup methods and how they will meet Ecology's cleanup standards. *The RI/FS report and a draft CAP for this site will be made available for public comment.*

Cleanup - Toxic substances are removed from the site, contained on the site, or treated to make them less toxic. Ecology will make sure that the CAP has been followed and can require that the site be monitored. Major changes to the CAP require a public notice before they can be finalized.

Delisting - Ecology keeps track of toxic cleanup sites on the Hazardous Sites List. Once the cleanup is complete, the public will have a chance to comment before the site is taken off the list.

More information about toxic cleanups is available on Ecology's Web site: http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/cu_support/cu_process_steps_defns.htm.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ACTIVITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The purpose of this Public Participation Plan is to promote public understanding and participation in the cleanup activities planned for this site. This section of the plan describes how Ecology will share information and receive public comments on the site activities. 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 cleanup of the USG Highway 99 site.

Formal Public Comment Periods

Comment periods are the primary method Ecology uses to get feedback from the public on proposed cleanup decisions. They usually last 30 days and are required at key points during the investigation and cleanup process before final decisions are made. During a comment period, the public can comment in writing. Verbal comments are taken if a public hearing is held. After comment periods, Ecology reviews all comments received and may respond in a document called a Responsiveness Summary. Ecology considers the need for changes or revisions to a document

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

Public comment periods will be held for the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study, the draft Cleanup Action Plan, and for any future legal agreements regarding this site.

Public Meetings and Hearings

Public meetings may be held at key points during the investigation and cleanup process. 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. A public meeting will also be scheduled if ten or more people request one.

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 three repositories for the USG Highway 99 cleanup:

- Pierce County Library – 1000 Laurel Street, Milton, WA 98354. (253) 922-2870.
- Citizens for a Healthy Bay – 917 Pacific Avenue Suite 100, Tacoma, WA 98402. (253) 383-2429.
- Washington State Department of Ecology, 300 Desmond Drive, Lacey, WA 98516. Please call (360) 407-6045 for an appointment.

Site information also will be posted on Ecology's Web site:

http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/USG_Hwy_99/USG_hwy_99_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:

http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/pub_inv/pub_inv2.html.

Mailing List

Ecology has compiled a mailing list for the site. It includes individuals, groups, public agencies, elected officials, private businesses, and other known interested parties. The list will be maintained at Ecology's Southwest Regional Office and will be updated as needed. Please contact Hannah Aoyagi at (360) 407-6790 or by e-mail at haoy461@ecy.wa.gov if you would like to be involved or 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 USG Highway 99 site cleanup 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 will place ads in the Tacoma News Tribune 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, the revised plan will be submitted to the public for comment.

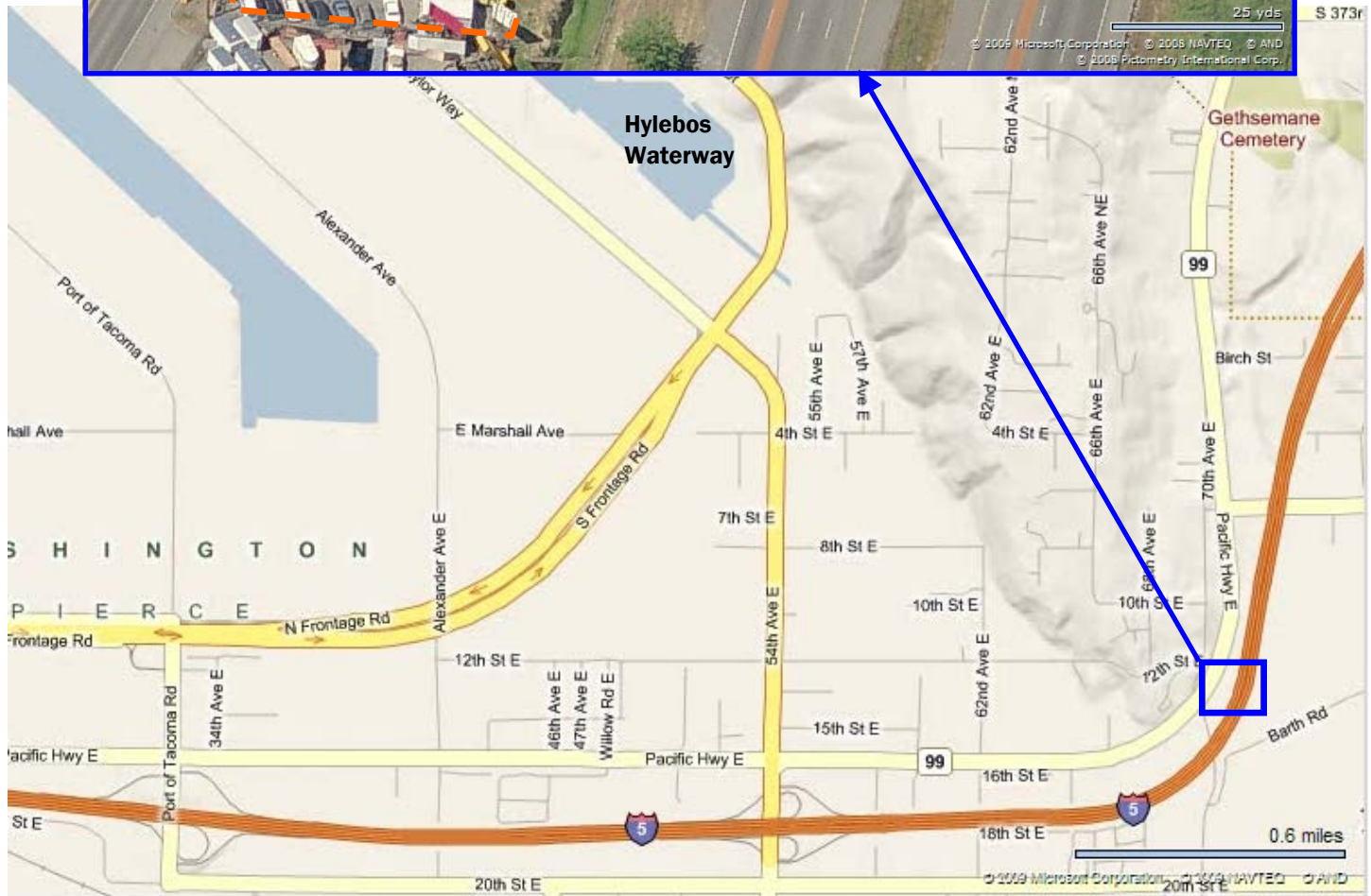
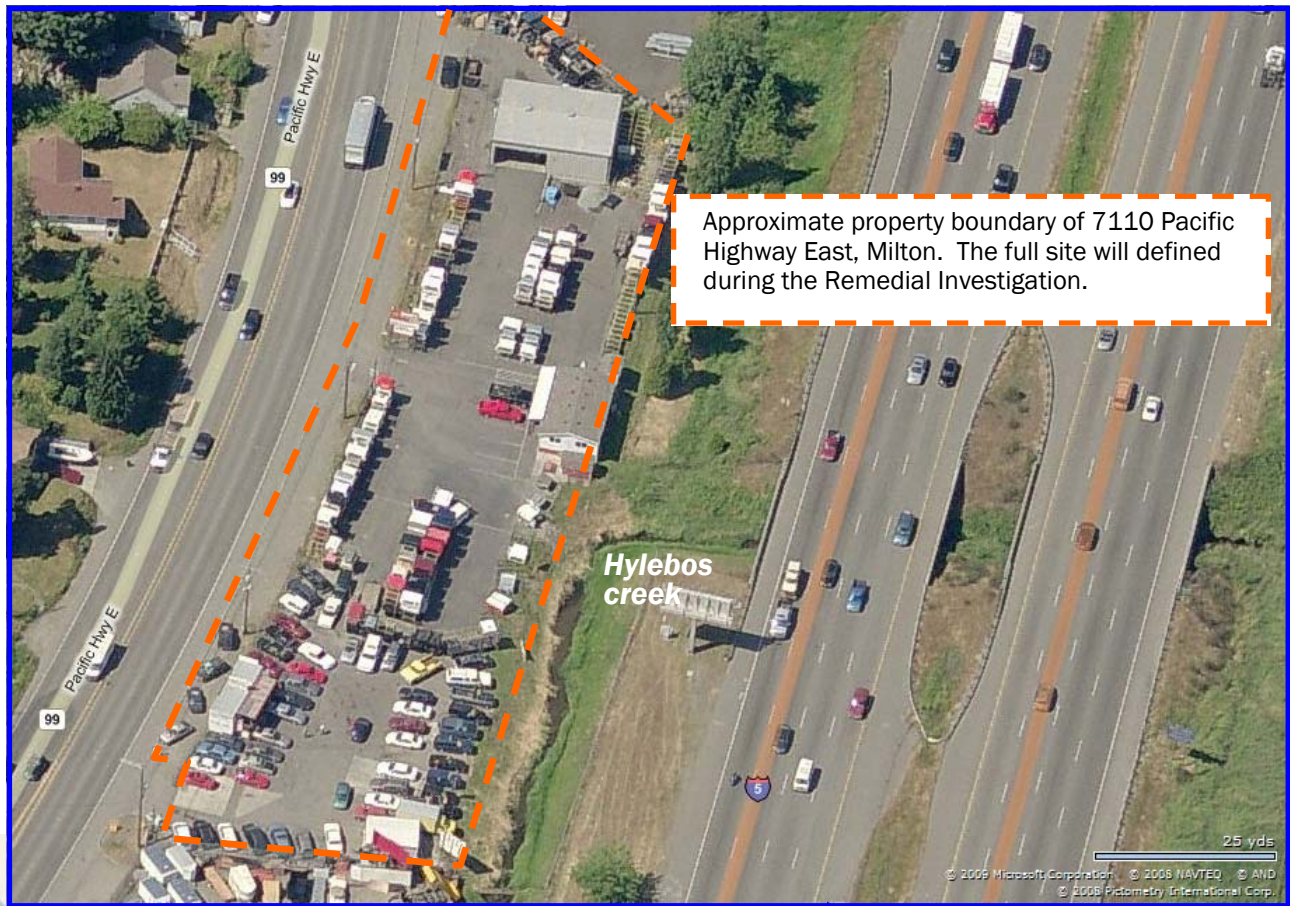
Contacts

If you have questions or need more information about this plan or the USG Highway 99 cleanup, please contact:

Dom Reale, Site Manager
Washington State Department of Ecology
300 Desmond Drive
Lacey, WA 98503
Tel: (360) 407-6266
Email: drea461@ecy.wa.gov

Hannah Aoyagi, Public Involvement Coordinator
Washington State Department of Ecology
300 Desmond Drive
Lacey, WA 98503
Tel: (360) 407-6790
Email: haoy461@ecy.wa.gov

SITE MAP - USG Highway 99, 7110 Pacific Highway East, Milton, WA



GLOSSARY

Agreed Order: A legal agreement between Ecology and a potentially liable person to conduct work toward a cleanup.

Cleanup: Actions taken to deal with a release, or threatened release of hazardous substances that could affect public health or the environment. The term "cleanup" is often used broadly to describe various response actions or phases of cleanup.

Cleanup Action Plan (CAP): A document that explains which cleanup alternative(s) will be used at sites for the cleanup. The cleanup action plan is based on information and technical analysis generated during the remedial investigation/feasibility study and consideration of public comments and community concerns.

Contaminant: Any hazardous substance that does not occur naturally or occurs at greater than natural background levels

Groundwater: Water found beneath the earth's surface that fills pores between materials such as sand, soil, or gravel. In some aquifers, ground water occurs in sufficient quantities that it can be used for drinking water, irrigation and other purposes.

Information Repository: A file containing current information, technical reports, and reference documents available for public review. The information repository is usually located in a public building that is convenient for local residents such as a public school, city hall, or library.

Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA): Legislation passed by citizens of the State of Washington through an initiative in 1988. Its purpose is to identify, investigate, and clean up facilities where hazardous substances have been released. It defines the role of Ecology and encourages public involvement in the decision making process. MTCA regulations are administered by the Washington State Department of Ecology.

Potentially Liable Person: 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 sites.

Public Notice: At a minimum, adequate notice mailed to all persons who have made a timely request of Ecology and to persons residing in the potentially affected vicinity of the proposed action; mailed to appropriate news media; published in the local (city and county) newspaper of largest circulation; and the opportunity for the interested persons to comment.

Risk: The probability that a hazardous substance, when released into the environment, will cause an adverse effect in the exposed humans or living organisms.

Site: Any building, structure, installation, equipment, pipe or pipeline (including any pipe into a sewer or publicly owned treatment works), well, pit, pond, lagoon, impoundment, ditch, landfill, storage container, motor vehicle, rolling stock, vessel, or aircraft; or any site or area where a hazardous substance, other than a consumer product in consumer use, has been deposited, stored, disposed of, or placed, or otherwise come to be located.

Toxicity: The degree to which a substance at a particular concentration is capable of causing harm to living organisms, including people, plants and animals.