J.H. Baxter & Company Arlington

Environmental investigation of wood preserving facility to begin

Ecology issues draft Agreed Order and stormwater permit

The Washington State Department of Ecology has drafted a legal agreement with the J.H. Baxter & Company for an environmental investigation and cleanup of contaminated soil and ground-water at the J.H. Baxter wood preserving facility in Arlington, Washington. Ecology is also in the process of renewing a wastewater discharge permit for J.H. Baxter to control the quality of the stormwater runoff being discharged to the ground.

The legal agreement, called an Agreed Order, describes the site activities that must occur and the work to be performed

The investigation is called a Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study. The RI/FS is a key step in the cleanup of sites contaminated with

(NPDES) sets limits on contaminants in stormwater being discharged to the ground. It also specifies treatment or other operating conditions necessary to control the quality of the discharge and to ensure compliance with the state water quality standards.

The NPDES permit is an important part of cleaning up the site and keeping it clean in the future. The contaminants in the stormwater runoff from the storage area of the treated wood products enter the ground and may also contaminate the groundwater.

The previous permit required J.H. Baxter to collect and provide analytical data to Ecology on the stormwater runoff. The data will be used to set limitations on contaminants being discharged to the ground and operating conditions in the renewed permit.

Comment Period:

June 1 to June 30 1999

Review Documents at:

Arlington Library
135 N. Washington
Arlington WA 98223
(360) 435-3033

J.H. Baxter
6520 - 188th Street NE
Arlington, WA 98223
(360) 435-2146

Department of Ecology
Northwest Regional Office
3190 160th Avenue SE
Bellevue, WA 98008
(425) 649-7190

Dept of Ecology website:
www.ecy.wa.gov/ecyhome.html

Send Comments to:
Site Manager
Ching-Pi Wang
Bellevue WA 98008
(425) 649-7134
e-mail: cwan461@ecy.wa.gov

Questions?
Public Involvement
Christine Corrigan
(425) 649-7254
e-mail: csun461@ecy.wa.gov

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425-649-4259 (TDD).

hazardous substances. During an RI/FS, the site is thoroughly investigated to determine the nature and extent of contamination. Based on the information gathered during the investigation, the feasibility study will contain an evaluation of site cleanup alternatives. A Cleanup Action Plan will then be prepared.

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit

Opportunity to comment

Before the Agreed Order and the NPDES permit become final, we offer you the opportunity to review the documents and give us your input. The box on the right has information about where the documents are available for review and where to send your comments. All comments must be received by June 30, 1999.

Facility background

The facility site is located at 6520 – 188th Street NE within the City of Arlington, Snohomish County, Washington. The facility borders on the south side of 188th Street NE, west of 67th Avenue NE, and east of Arlington Airport and 59th Dr. NE.

J.H. Baxter is a privately owned company which produces telephone and power poles using a pressure treating process with pentachlorophenol (PCP) at its facility. This facility covers approximately 52 acres, 17 of which are used for pole treatment operations, 28 for untreated pole storage and pole peeling, and 7 acres of a closed wood waste landfill. Approximately 90% of the area is unpaved.

Facility history

J.H. Baxter & Company has owned and operated the wood treating facility in Arlington since 1971. The site was previously operated as a pole treatment plant. The plant was built by Ted

during the investigation, cleanup actions can then be selected and a Cleanup Action Plan prepared. However, if significant data gaps are identified, more work may be needed in order to select a final cleanup alternative.

A private well survey will be conducted as part of the Remedial Investigation to ensure that all wells in the study area are identified and evaluated for potential impacts.

Future opportunity for comment

When the RI/FS and Cleanup Action Plan are complete, the public will again be invited to comment. The comment period for the RI/FS and Cleanup Action Plan is a key point for the public to give input. Once comments on the RI/FS report and the Cleanup Action Plan are received and reviewed and any necessary changes are made, work on the final cleanup of the site can be completed.

Butcher in the 1960's and operated until 1970. Prior to that time, the land was used for agriculture.

Each year Baxter treats approximately 40,000 poles using 200,000 gallons per year of an organic-based preservative containing approximately 5% PCP.

PCP spills occurred at the site in 1981, 1989, and 1990. An adjacent mobile home park was taken off of its domestic supply well and hooked up to city water by J.H. Baxter in 1992. This was done because one of the monitoring wells at the northwest corner of the site, at the property boundary, had concentrations of PCP.

What we know about the contamination

Groundwater: Groundwater appears to have been impacted by historic wood preserving practices and spills at the site. It is not known whether any contaminated groundwater has moved beyond the site.

Soil: The soils beneath the site may be contaminated by current operations and past spills. It is not known how much of the soil is contaminated.

Stormwater: Elevated levels of dioxins/furans and PCP were found in stormwater samples.

What happens during the investigation

The Remedial Investigation will concentrate on gathering sufficient information to determine the nature, extent, and magnitude of contamination at the site. The Feasibility Study will analyze possible cleanup alternatives. If adequate information is collected during