

Soil air testing in Auburn and Algona

Under the Washington Department of Ecology’s direction, The Boeing Company’s contractor will collect soil air samples near your business. Soil air (or soil gas) is the vapors in the air spaces between soil particles. The sample results will be used to evaluate contaminant concentrations in the soil air above the water table, and to determine whether these contaminants are potentially moving into indoor air people breath – through a process called vapor intrusion.

If the tests indicate that contaminant concentrations in the soil air could pose an indoor air quality problem, further air testing will be performed inside the buildings.

This testing will take place along Milwaukee Ave. N. in commercial Algona, just south of Boundary Blvd. In commercial Auburn, there will be borings drilled along 15th St. SW east of Highway 167 and extending just past Market St. Work will begin on Monday, March 16 and last for approximately one week.



A typical drill rig used for soil air testing.

Project background

Chemicals related to industrial manufacturing have contaminated groundwater – the water that flows under the ground through the soil - with a degreaser called trichloroethene (TCE; also called trichloroethylene) and its breakdown products. It is believed that the chemicals originated from the Boeing Auburn facility. The contaminated groundwater (called a plume) flows north and northwest away from the Boeing property, into portions of southwest Auburn and northeast Algona.

Ecology is overseeing the Boeing Company’s investigation of the contamination and is responsible for selecting and writing a plan for cleanup. This plan will be subject to public comment and final Ecology approval.

Cleanup timeline



◆ Throughout the cleanup process there will be opportunities for public comment.

How is the contamination investigated?

People can be exposed to the contamination through three primary ways:

- Drinking contaminated water
- Touching contaminated water
- Breathing contaminated air

Under Ecology direction, Boeing and its contractors are collecting samples to better understand which chemicals are present, their locations and concentrations, and behavior over time. There are three primary areas where samples are being collected:

- Groundwater wells are installed to clearly identify areas of contamination in the groundwater and to monitor concentrations of contaminants over time.
- Surface water is collected in wetlands, creeks, yards, and ditches to find out if surface water is contaminated and, if so, at what concentrations.
- Indoor air quality and soil air is tested (for buildings and soil overlying contaminated shallow groundwater) to determine if vapors have migrated into indoor air.

What do we know now?

Testing of the groundwater, surface water, and indoor air quality is ongoing to best identify the locations and concentrations of chemicals. To date, the chemicals found are at low levels that are not expected to pose a risk to human health and the environment. If chemicals are found to be an immediate risk to human health and the environment, Ecology will direct Boeing to implement interim actions to reduce risk. To view the most recent study results, visit the Department of Ecology website.

Who is involved in the cleanup?

The Department of Ecology oversees the site investigations, cleanup planning and implementation. As the Potentially Liable Party, the Boeing Company pays for the site investigations and cleanup. The Cities of Algona, Auburn and Pacific provide input into the cleanup planning. Public comment periods are held at key decision points as well, and citizens are encouraged to submit comments. Department of Ecology staff are available to provide more information and answer questions throughout the cleanup process.

For ADA accommodations or documents in alternate format, call the Hazardous Waste and Toxics Reduction Program at 360-407-6700, 711 (relay service), or 877-833-6341 (TTY).

Si necesita información en español, favor de contactar a Luis Buen Abad al 425-649-4485.

For More Information

Call our hotline!

(253) 219-7645

¿Preguntas o Inquietudes?

Llama (253) 219-7645

Email the project:

BoeingAuburnSite@ecy.wa.gov

**Submit Comments and
Technical Questions to:**

Neal Hines - Site Manager
Neal.Hines@ECY.WA.GOV

Ecology's Website

bit.ly/EcyBoeingAuburn

**Facility Site ID #2018
Cleanup ID #5049**

Is the drinking water safe?

Public drinking water systems are regularly monitored by the Department of Health to make sure they are safe for people to drink. The contaminated groundwater is located a safe distance from the cities' water supplies. Private wells are not monitored like public drinking water. Please call Ecology if you have a private well.

