

# Health Consultation

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CLEANCARE CORPORATION SITE  
TACOMA, PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON

JANUARY 26, 2000

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
Public Health Service  
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry  
Division of Health Assessment and Consultation  
Atlanta, Georgia 30333

## **Health Consultation: A Note of Explanation**

An ATSDR health consultation is a verbal or written response from ATSDR to a specific request for information about health risks related to a specific site, a chemical release, or the presence of hazardous material. In order to prevent or mitigate exposures, a consultation may lead to specific actions, such as restricting use of or replacing water supplies; intensifying environmental sampling; restricting site access; or removing the contaminated material.

In addition, consultations may recommend additional public health actions, such as conducting health surveillance activities to evaluate exposure or trends in adverse health outcomes; conducting biological indicators of exposure studies to assess exposure; and providing health education for health care providers and community members. This concludes the health consultation process for this site, unless additional information is obtained by ATSDR which, in the Agency's opinion, indicates a need to revise or append the conclusions previously issued.

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HEALTH CONSULTATION

CLEANCARE CORPORATION SITE

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Prepared by:

Petition Response Section  
Exposure Investigation and Consultation Branch  
Division of Health Assessment and Consultation  
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry

## Background and Statement of Issues

On January 5, 2000, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) received a request from the ATSDR Regional Office located in Seattle, Washington, on behalf of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 10 to review a data package for the CleanCare Site in Tacoma, Washington [1]. The CleanCare Corporation Site is a former treatment, storage, disposal, and recycling facility located at 1510 Taylor Way, Tacoma, Washington. The CleanCare Site operated as an interim treatment, storage, and disposal facility for hazardous and nonhazardous wastes that were generated off the site. When the facility was in operation, its major functions were to solidify oily sludge wastes originating from catch basins, sumps, and storm drains; recycle waste oils, antifreeze, and spent solvents; and crush used oil filters for off-site recycling by other facilities. CleanCare also received hazardous waste and dangerous wastes regulated by the Washington Department of Ecology. This waste was either blended into hazardous waste fuel or was stored for transport to another facility for final treatment and/or disposal.

The site consists of approximately 5 acres in the tide flats area of the Commencement Bay Superfund site between the Hylebos and Blair waterways. Originally wetlands, the area is zoned for industrial use. From 1969 until 1981, the site was used for the disposal of lime wastes, sludge, and auto fluff (the nonmetallic parts of automobiles, including cloth, foam rubber, ground-up glass, leather, plastic, rubber, string, tires, and vinyl) [2]. In the late 1970s, a chemical and petroleum recycling facility began operating on the site under the company name of Poligen. The name of the company operating the facility changed numerous times, becoming CleanCare in 1992. New owners took over CleanCare in 1997 and installed a sludge processing system and an additional concrete pad. The company went out of business on November 17, 1999.

EPA's request for technical assistance from ATSDR was accompanied by an EPA action memorandum for the CleanCare Site dated January 5, 2000. The memorandum specifies a request for removal action, among other requests, and gives the site ownership history and a detailed explanation of current site characteristics.

EPA asked two specific questions concerning the CleanCare Site:

- Does ATSDR concur that an imminent and substantial threat to human health exists supporting a time critical removal at the site?
- What public health issues, if any, should be considered/addressed after the removal?

2. Children are shorter and their breathing zone is closer to the ground, resulting in a greater likelihood to breathe dust, soil, and heavy vapors.
3. Children are smaller and receive higher doses of chemical exposure per body weight.
4. Children's developing body systems are more vulnerable to toxic exposures, especially during critical growth stages in which permanent damage may be incurred.

Although the CleanCare Site is located in an area zoned for industry, surface water runoff from the site has the potential to migrate to bodies of water used for recreational purposes and thereby present a potential exposure to children or other sensitive populations.

### **Conclusions**

Based on the information in the January 5, 2000, EPA Action Memorandum, ATSDR concurs that an imminent and substantial threat to human health exists and removal/cleanup operations should begin immediately.

### **Recommendations**

- Immediate measures should be taken to prevent unauthorized access to site grounds.
- Additional characterization of soil, sediment, and groundwater should be done as warranted to ensure that contaminants of public health concern have not and will not migrate off the site during post-removal activities and to provide information for remediation to prevent or eliminate exposure.
- ATSDR will be available to review post-removal sampling data for public health significance.

*Prepared by*

Theresa I. Kilgus, M.S.P.H.  
Environmental Health Scientist  
Petitions Response Section  
Exposure Investigations and Consultations Branch  
Division of Health Assessment and Consultation

David A. Fowler, Ph.D.  
Environmental Health Scientist  
Health Consultations Section  
Exposure Investigations and Consultations Branch  
Division of Health Assessment and Consultation

*Reviewed by*

Maurice C. West, P.E., DEE  
Deputy Branch Chief  
Exposure Investigations and Consultations Branch  
Division of Health Assessment and Consultation

**References**

1. Technical Assistance Request from Richard Kauffman, ATSDR Region 10 regional representative, on behalf of U.S. EPA Region 10. January 5, 2000.
2. Action Memorandum from Michael J. Szerlog, On-Scene Coordinator, Environmental Protection Agency, to Michael F. Gearheard, Director, Office of Environmental Cleanup. January 5, 2000.
3. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. Interim guidance on including child health issues in Division of Health Assessment and Consultation Documents. Atlanta: US Department of Health and Human Services. July 1998.

