

# SUBURBAN MECHANICAL



## Public comment sought on proposal to remove cleaned-up site from state's Hazardous Sites List

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) has prepared this fact sheet pursuant to the Model Toxics Control Act Chapter 70.105D to provide you with information about a proposal to remove the Suburban Mechanical site from its list of contaminated sites (known as the Hazardous Sites List).

Suburban Mechanical is ranked "4" on the Hazardous Sites List. A rank of "1" represents the highest level of concern relative to other sites on the list and a rank of "5" the lowest. You are welcome and encouraged to comment on this proposal through February 4, 2002.

### Site background

The Suburban Mechanical site is currently known as Suburban Manor and is located along 99<sup>th</sup> Street East and 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue East in Tacoma, Pierce County. The site consists of five tax parcels and covers approximately three acres. Currently vacant, there are plans to build homes on the property.

From 1975 to 1992, Suburban Mechanical – a land clearing and utilities contractor – used the site as its headquarters and stored heavy equipment and other miscellaneous items on the property. After it went

out of business in 1992 and up until 1997, portions of the site were used for heavy equipment storage and automotive repair.

During a hazardous waste inspection in 1995, an inspector found the tenants were using poor waste management practices. Solvents and petroleum contained in drums and buckets had leaked and spilled into the soil.

In 1997, the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, in conjunction with the Department of Ecology, conducted a Site Hazard Assessment of the property to determine its risk to human health and the environment. They found the soil was contaminated with metals, petroleum product, polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons, and non-halogenated solvents. Based on this information, Ecology ranked the site a "4" and placed it on the Hazardous Sites List.

*Polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons are found in such products as coal tar, crude oil, and creosote.*

*Non-halogenated solvents are organic and are frequently used in paints, fuels, and degreasing and cleaning products.*

*Some people who have breathed or touched mixtures of polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons, non-halogenated solvents, and other chemicals for long periods of time have developed cancer.*

**January 2002**

### Public Comment Period

January 7 through February 4, 2002

### Comments should be directed to:

Marv Coleman, Site Manager  
Department of Ecology  
Toxics Cleanup Program  
Southwest Regional Office  
PO Box 47775  
Olympia WA 98504-7775  
(360) 407-6259  
[mcol461@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:mcol461@ecy.wa.gov)

### Information Repositories

*Department of Ecology*  
300 Desmond Drive SE  
Lacey WA 98503  
Attn: Sherri Greenup @ (360) 407-6365

*Pierce County Library*  
3005 112<sup>th</sup> St. E.  
Tacoma

*Citizens for a Healthy Bay*  
917 Pacific Ave., Tacoma  
(253) 383-2429

**The Department of Ecology is an Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Employer. If you have special accommodate needs, please call (360) 407-7200 or (360) 407-6006 (TDD).**

Printed on Recycled Paper

## **The cleanup**

In 1997, the property owner conducted an interim cleanup that consisted of removing waste materials in drums and buckets and excavating eight tons of contaminated soil from four locations (where staining was visible).

In 2000, soil samples from 14 locations were taken at a depth where contamination was most likely. The locations were selected based on site history, a visual inspection of the property, and results of previous site work. Contaminated soil was found at 2 of the 14 locations and treated on-site.

In 2001, the property owner entered Ecology's Voluntary Cleanup Program to have their cleanup reports formally reviewed by the agency. Upon review, Ecology requested additional investigation at four areas.

As a result, six new test pits were dug, including three in an area where fill material, such as demolition debris, had been extensive. Blue clay (which had an odor of decaying vegetation) was found in most of the pits. Soil samples taken from one of the odorous pits and from a pit that had a mild, weathered petroleum smell, revealed no contamination above state cleanup standards.

Ecology also investigated an area where two drums had allegedly been buried. Using a magnetometer and excavating a test pit in the area, Ecology found no metal.

Last June, Ecology took two stormwater samples from a ditch on the northwest corner of the property. The samples, which were tested for organic analyses, contained no contaminants above appropriate Water Quality Standards.

## **Why delist the site**

Based on a review of cleanup reports and further investigation and sampling, Ecology has determined the site is not a threat to human health or the environment and has recommended removing the site from the Hazardous Sites List.

## **The public's role in removing the site from the Hazardous Sites List**

You now have an opportunity to review the cleanup reports and comment on Ecology's proposal to remove the site from the Hazardous Sites List. Through February 4, 2002, your comments will be accepted in writing by Marv Coleman, Site Manager, at the Department of Ecology-TCP, P.O. Box 47775, Olympia WA 98504-7775, phone (360) 407-6259, e-mail [mcol461@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:mcol461@ecy.wa.gov).

If substantive comments are received, further investigation or cleanup may occur at the site.

---

## **Public Comment Period**

**1/7/02 – 2/4/02**

---