

New Cleanup Agreement and Waste Unit Closure Plans Available for Public Comment

Department of Ecology is entering into an Agreed Order with the Port of Tacoma (port) for cleanup of the Port of Tacoma Kaiser (Kaiser) site. The Agreed Order (legal agreement) requires the port to investigate contamination and plan for cleanup. You can comment on the Agreed Order and waste unit closure plan (see page 2) from **April 21 to May 20, 2011**. The box on the right shows where to find the documents and submit your comments.

The Kaiser site consists of 96 acres in the Tacoma tide flats, at 3400 Taylor Way (map on page 3). The Department of Defense and Kaiser Aluminum Company operated an aluminum smelter and manufacturing plant there for over 60 years. After some cleanup by Kaiser Aluminum, the port will now address remaining contamination and return the property to productive use.

Why Cleanup Matters

Kaiser has been an Ecology-managed cleanup site since the early 1980s. Kaiser Aluminum closed in 2001. In 2003, the port bought the site and began taking down the plant. It also began doing partial cleanups called Interim Actions. The port is now finishing the cleanup so the site can be put back into productive use. Cleaning up contamination will improve the health of the local environment and allow the land to be redeveloped.



Former Kaiser Aluminum Company plant demolition

Comments Accepted

April 21 to May 20, 2011

Submit Comments and Technical Questions to:

Marv Coleman, Site Manager
Toxics Cleanup Program, SWRO
P.O. Box 47775
Olympia, WA 98504-7775
Phone: (360) 407-6259
E-mail: Marv.Coleman@ecy.wa.gov

Public Involvement Questions:

Hannah Aoyagi
Phone: (360) 407-6790
E-mail: Hannah.Aoyagi@ecy.wa.gov

DOCUMENT REVIEW LOCATIONS

Tacoma Public Library

1102 Tacoma Avenue
Tacoma, WA 98402
Phone: (253) 591-5666

Citizens for a Healthy Bay

917 Pacific Avenue, Suite 100
Tacoma, WA 98402
Phone: (253) 383-2429

WA Department of Ecology Southwest Regional Office

300 Desmond Drive SE
Lacey, WA 98503

By appointment only:

Contact Debbie Nelson,
Debbie.Nelson@ecy.wa.gov or
(360) 407-6365

Ecology's Toxics Cleanup Web site

http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/PortTacomaKaiser/PortTacomaKaiser_hp.html

Facility Site ID #: 38

Site Contamination

The aluminum smelting process and waste handling practices contaminated several areas of the site (see map on page 3). The Agreed Order mainly focuses on planning cleanup of spent pot liner contamination. Under the agreement, the port must complete the following work:

- **Remedial Investigation**—Describes the nature and extent of contamination (what chemicals, how deep, and how far across).
- **Feasibility Study**—Compares possible cleanup options.
- **Draft Cleanup Action Plan**—Describes the proposed cleanup actions for the site.

Cleanup under this Agreed Order

Spent pot liner: Kaiser smelted aluminum in large metal pots lined with an asphalt-like substance. Over time, the lining broke down and had to be replaced.

Before 1967, Kaiser put this “spent pot liner” on the bare ground, leaving **polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAH)** and **cyanide** contamination in the soil and groundwater.

Cleanup already complete

Rectifier yard: Electrical equipment in this area leaked oil and **polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)**. PCBs are a mix of chemicals no longer made in the United States. However, they do not break down easily and stay in the environment for a long time.

Rod mill: Kaiser formed some of their aluminum into rods for sale. This was done at the rod mill. Kaiser removed over 1,000 tons of PAH contaminated soils in 2008. A small landfill remains, which the port will address.

PAHs are a group of over 100 chemicals that come from burning fossil fuels and organic waste. They are toxic to humans and the environment and may cause cancer.

The Cleanup Process

Before cleanup can begin, the port must investigate what contamination remains on the site and how far it extends. This step is called the Remedial Investigation. Next, the Feasibility Study will weigh cleanup options and help the port draft a Cleanup Action Plan. The port must also include the cleanup reports from the rod mill and rectifier yard in its cleanup plan.

What Happens Next

During this work, Ecology may approve interim actions (partial cleanup) to address immediate environmental concerns, or speed up the overall cleanup process. Ecology will make the draft Cleanup Action Plan available for public comment. Ecology and the port will need to sign a new agreement to do the final cleanup actions.

Waste Management Unit Closure Plans

Ecology is also taking comments on closure plans for two dangerous waste management units at the site:

1. A spent potliner (SPL) storage pad and storage area.
2. An SPL storage building.

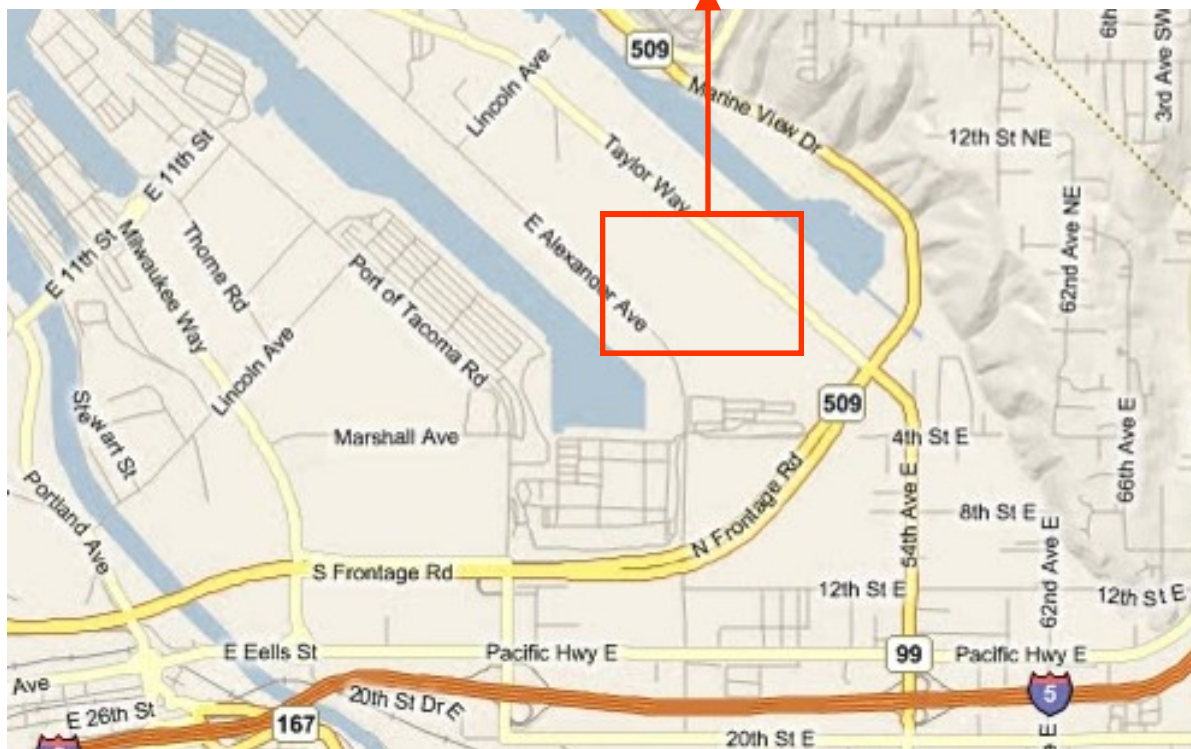
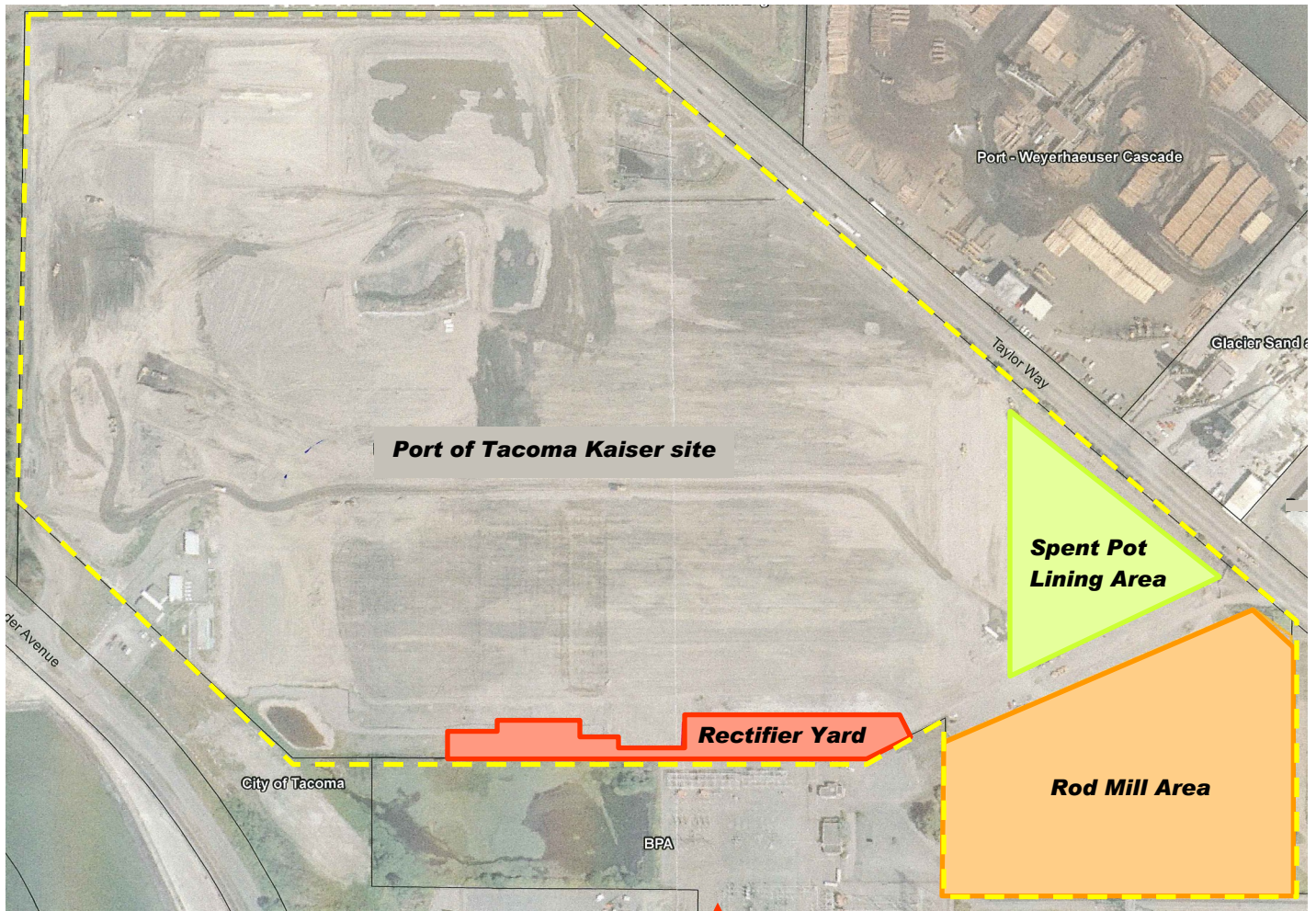
Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)

RCRA is a federal law to control hazardous waste. Kaiser “clean closed” both units under RCRA “interim status” during the demolition of the smelter. Clean closure requires all waste to be properly removed or treated.

What happens next?

The port must now show the site is clean before finishing the RCRA process. See Ecology’s website (page 1) for more details and links to the closure plans.

Port of Tacoma Kaiser




Port of Tacoma Kaiser site, 3400 Taylor Way, Tacoma WA



DEPARTMENT OF
ECOLOGY
State of Washington

PO Box 47775

Olympia, WA 98504-7775

 Please recycle.

Port of Tacoma Kaiser Pierce County, WA

Ecology Seeks Public Comment on Agreed Order for Cleanup

Public Comment Period:

April 21–May 20, 2011

Facility Site ID #: 38

If you need this publication in an alternative format, call reception at (360) 407-6300. Persons with hearing loss, call 711 for Washington Relay Service. Persons with speech disability call 877-833-6341

Why did I receive this mailing?

This fact sheet was sent to individuals, organizations, businesses, and government staff with an interest in Port of Tacoma cleanup and redevelopment. Ecology and the port are taking a major step towards completing investigation and cleanup of the former Kaiser Aluminum facility.

We welcome your comments throughout this process!

To be removed from the mailing list:

Contact Hannah Aoyagi, Public Involvement Coordinator at Hannah.Aoyagi@ecy.wa.gov or 360-407-6790.
