

Soil Sampling in West Seattle, Capitol Hill, Ballard, Ravenna and Other Seattle Neighborhoods

The Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) is conducting a statewide study on dioxins and furans in soil. As part of this study, Ecology is collecting samples in both rural and urban areas of Washington. **Starting the week of March 28, Ecology will be collecting soil samples in several Seattle neighborhoods.**

The City of Seattle is partnering with Ecology to take soil samples along public road right-of-ways including planting strips. The Seattle locations include South Park, Georgetown, Ravenna, Capitol Hill, West Seattle, Fremont and Ballard. The goal of the study is to determine the range and amount of dioxins in urban areas of Washington, including some areas in Seattle.

What You Can Expect

Ecology's contractor and City staff will take samples during March and April. The samples will come from publicly accessible locations on public right-of-ways. No sampling will be done on private property. There shouldn't be any disruption to either vehicle or pedestrian traffic patterns.

Next Steps

- The City and Ecology's contractor will collect soil samples from 20 randomly chosen public right-of-way locations in each neighborhood. A total of 120 samples will be collected.
- Ecology will then analyze samples for dioxins and furans.
- Ecology will share results with neighborhoods through a fact sheet and at neighborhood meetings this summer.

Why is this study important?

The study results will provide a better understanding of the range of dioxin/furan concentrations in urban soils. Some studies have already measured dioxin and furan levels in South Park and other nearby Duwamish River locations.

Results of the study will help us answer the following questions:

- Are more studies needed to better understand possible contamination levels in one or more study areas?
- Do dioxin concentrations differ in urban soil with different types of historical land use?

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Document Locations

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Seattle Public Library

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Visit Ecology's Web site to read the study sampling plan:

http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/sites/lower_duwamish/lower_duwamish_hp.html

Seattle Soil Dioxin Study

- What long-term strategies are needed for areas where we find widespread dioxin levels that are above cleanup levels?

This study is limited in size and won't be able to answer questions about individual sources of contamination or contamination levels on individual properties.

What Are Dioxins?

Dioxins are a family of chemicals that have similar chemical structures and biological effects. They are by-products of both human activities and natural processes.

Dioxins can be formed during forest fires and industrial processes, like chlorine bleaching and in certain types of chemical manufacturing. Dioxins can also be formed during burning and waste incineration. This includes home burn barrels, fireplaces, and wood stoves. Dioxins don't break down easily in the environment, and as a result, are found everywhere. For more information about dioxins, visit <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/TF.asp?id=363&tid=63>

