

## Working in Arsenic and Lead Contaminated Soils

For construction workers, gardeners, landscapers, and their employers.



The Tacoma Smelter Plume is a 1,000 square mile area (see map on back) contaminated with arsenic and lead. Asarco's former copper smelter in north Tacoma released arsenic, lead and other heavy metals for over 100 years. The wind carried these pollutants and they settled on surface soils across parts of King, Pierce, and Thurston counties.

### Workplace Safety Rules May Apply to You!

The Washington Department of Labor and Industries (LNI) has rules to protect workers from arsenic and lead in the workplace. These apply to any employees exposed to soils within the Tacoma Smelter Plume. **Employers** must comply with all workplace safety rules on toxic exposures, including:

- Arsenic, Chapter 296-848, WAC.
- Lead, Chapter 296-62, WAC.
- Hazardous Waste Operations, Chapter 296-843, WAC.

For help understanding and complying with these rules, please contact LNI at the number listed to the right.

### Why It Matters

Arsenic and lead are toxic metals. Exposure can increase the risk of certain health problems. Arsenic and lead are not easily absorbed through the skin. However, working in soil can increase the risk of accidentally swallowing soil and breathing dust.

### Health Effects of Arsenic and Lead

Scientists have linked long-term exposure to arsenic to heart disease, diabetes, and cancer of the bladder, lung, skin, kidney, liver and prostate. Lead is especially harmful to children. It can cause behavioral problems, permanent learning difficulties, and reduced physical growth.

**We can help!** If you live within the Tacoma Smelter Plume, contact your local Dirt Alert program (right) for more information. Depending on where you live, your yard may qualify for free soil testing.

### More Information

#### Worker Safety

Department of Labor and Industries

Safety and Health

1-800-423-7233

<http://www.lni.wa.gov>

#### Tacoma Smelter Plume

Department of Ecology

Project Planner

Jill Reitz

(360) 407-6245

[Jill.Reitz@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:Jill.Reitz@ecy.wa.gov)

<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/toxics/tacoma-smelter.html>

#### Dirt Alert! Programs for Families

Tacoma-Pierce County Health Dept.

(253) 798-6492

[DirtAlert@tpchd.org](mailto:DirtAlert@tpchd.org)

Public Health—Seattle & King County

(206) 477-DIRT

[DirtAlert@kingcounty.gov](mailto:DirtAlert@kingcounty.gov)

Thurston County Public Health

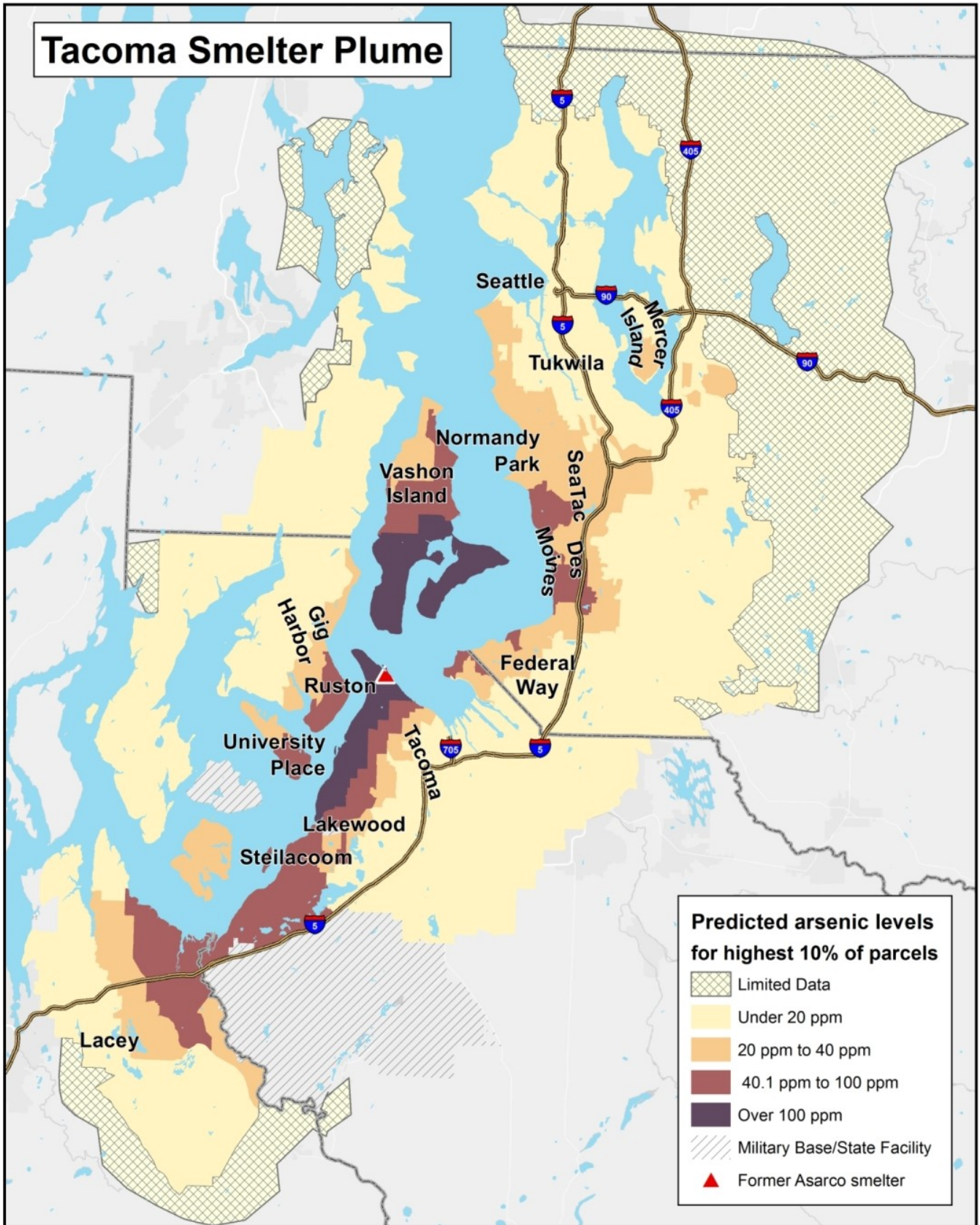
(360) 867-2582

[venninj@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:venninj@co.thurston.wa.us)

If you need this publication in another 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.

Facility Site ID #: 89267963





With 90% certainty, at least 1 in 10 parcels will have arsenic in soil at or above levels shown. Predictions are based on distance and direction from the former Asarco smelter, and on sampling data from forested and other soils undisturbed by development. Actual arsenic levels may vary greatly from parcel to parcel. Arsenic levels are shown in parts per million (ppm). This map is also available at: <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/smeltersearch/>.