



# POLLUTION PREVENTION ASSISTANCE PARTNERSHIP

2019–2021 BIENNIUM REPORT



DECEMBER 2021  
ECOLOGY PUBLICATION 21-04-049





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# MEET THE PARTNERSHIP

In 2007, the Washington State Legislature allocated funding to establish the Local Source Control Partnership, a pollution prevention assistance program that helps small businesses reduce and manage potential wastes to protect water, soil, and air quality.

Local Source Control was rebranded as Pollution Prevention Assistance (PPA) in 2016. This new name was part of an effort to emphasize the benefits of the program to the public and businesses.

The partnership uses a unique team approach involving local, regional, and state staff with the expertise to solve pollution problems through source control.

Through interagency agreements with the Department of Ecology, local jurisdictions get funding to provide free, one-on-one technical assistance to small businesses. Specialists in these jurisdictions show businesses how to manage their wastes properly and help diagnose and fix stormwater-related issues. Specialists can also offer businesses help with complicated regulatory issues.

# WHAT IS PPA?

**The PPA Partnership** is comprised of local governments including cities, counties, and health districts.

**PPA:** A technical assistance program that helps small businesses prevent pollution.

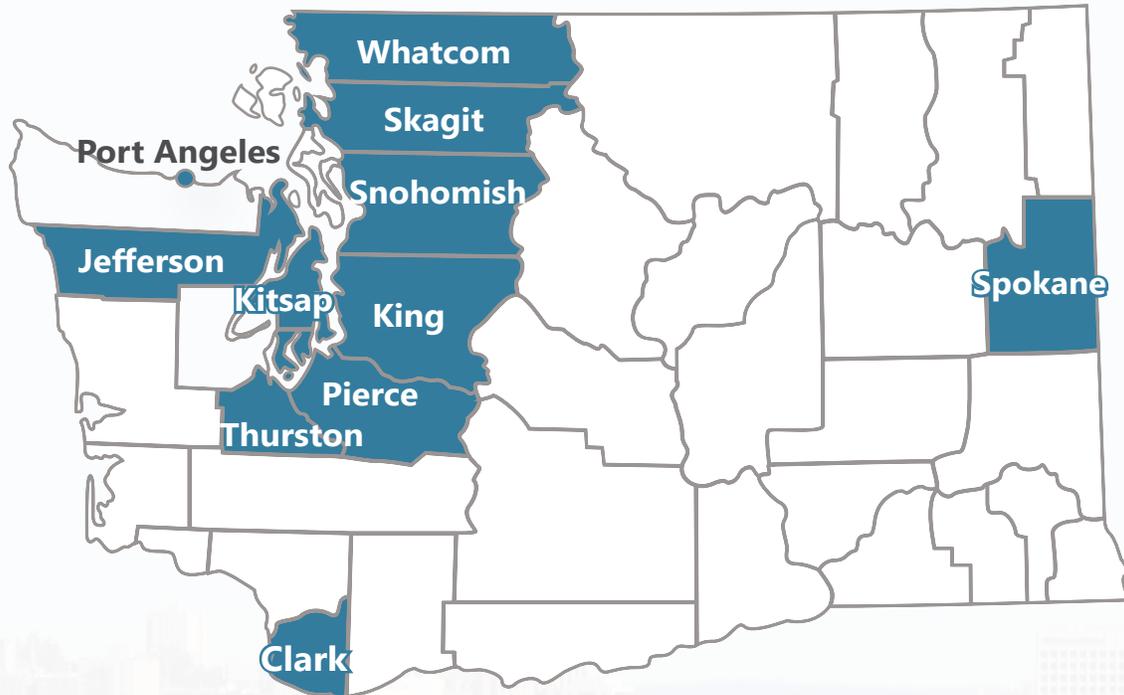
**The problem:** Small businesses typically have limited access to expertise on stormwater management or hazardous waste handling and disposal. Hands-on assistance and regulatory advice can be hard to come by.

**The solution:** PPA specialists in participating jurisdictions offer free, onsite technical assistance to help small businesses identify and resolve possible causes of pollution. This assistance and regulatory advice reduces health risks for employees and prevents polluted runoff from harming Washington's rivers and streams, as well as Puget Sound.

## **Thanks to Pollution Prevention Assistance, businesses:**

- Adopt safer material-handling and storage practices.
- Manage interior and exterior drainage systems to reduce impacts to stormwater.
- Plan for spill prevention and preparedness.
- Use fewer toxics in their processes or replace toxic chemicals with safer alternatives.

# PARTNER JURISDICTIONS



During the 2019–2021 biennium, the partnerships consisted of 42 specialists from 22 jurisdictions. PPA Partners were located in three critical areas: Puget Sound, the Columbia River Basin, and the Spokane River Basin.



## 2019–2021 PARTNER JURISDICTIONS

### **Clallam County**

City of Port Angeles

### **Clark County**

Clark County Department of  
Public Works

Clark County Public Health  
City of Vancouver

### **Jefferson County**

Jefferson County Public Health

### **King County**

City of Bothell  
City of Issaquah  
City of Kirkland  
City of Redmond  
City of Shoreline  
King County Water and Land  
Seattle Public Utilities

### **Kitsap County**

Kitsap Public Health District

### **Pierce County**

City of Puyallup  
City of Sumner  
Tacoma-Pierce County Health  
Department

### **Skagit County**

Skagit County Department of  
Public Health

### **Snohomish County**

Snohomish Health District

### **Spokane County**

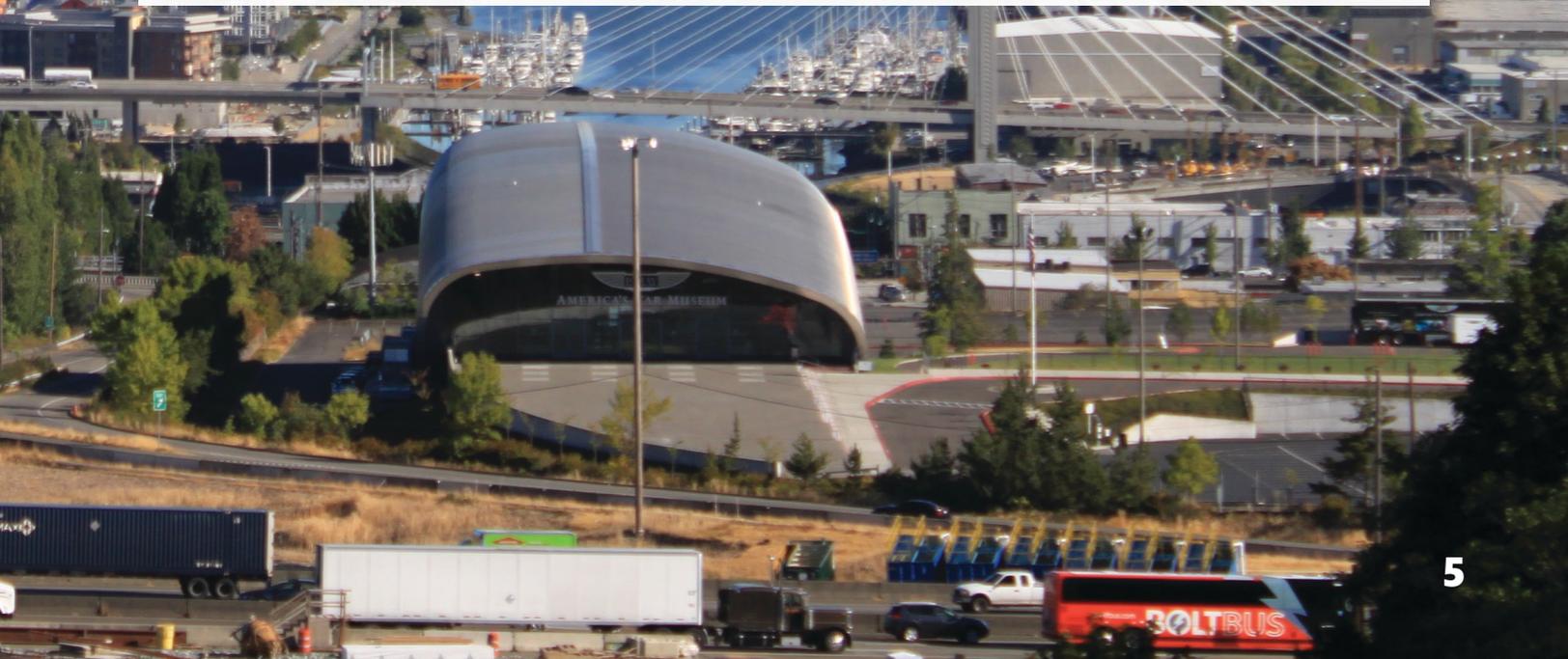
Spokane Regional Health District

### **Thurston County**

Thurston County Public Health

### **Whatcom County**

City of Bellingham  
Whatcom County Health  
Department



# INDUSTRIES SPECIALISTS SERVE

Specialists can **serve most industries**. During the 2019–2021 biennium, some of the most common industries served included:

- Restaurants, cafes, and bars.
- General automotive repair facilities.
- Commercial and personal laundry services.
- Gas stations with convenience stores.
- Hotels (except casino hotels) and motels.
- Supermarkets and other grocery stores.
- Landscaping companies.
- Elementary and secondary schools.



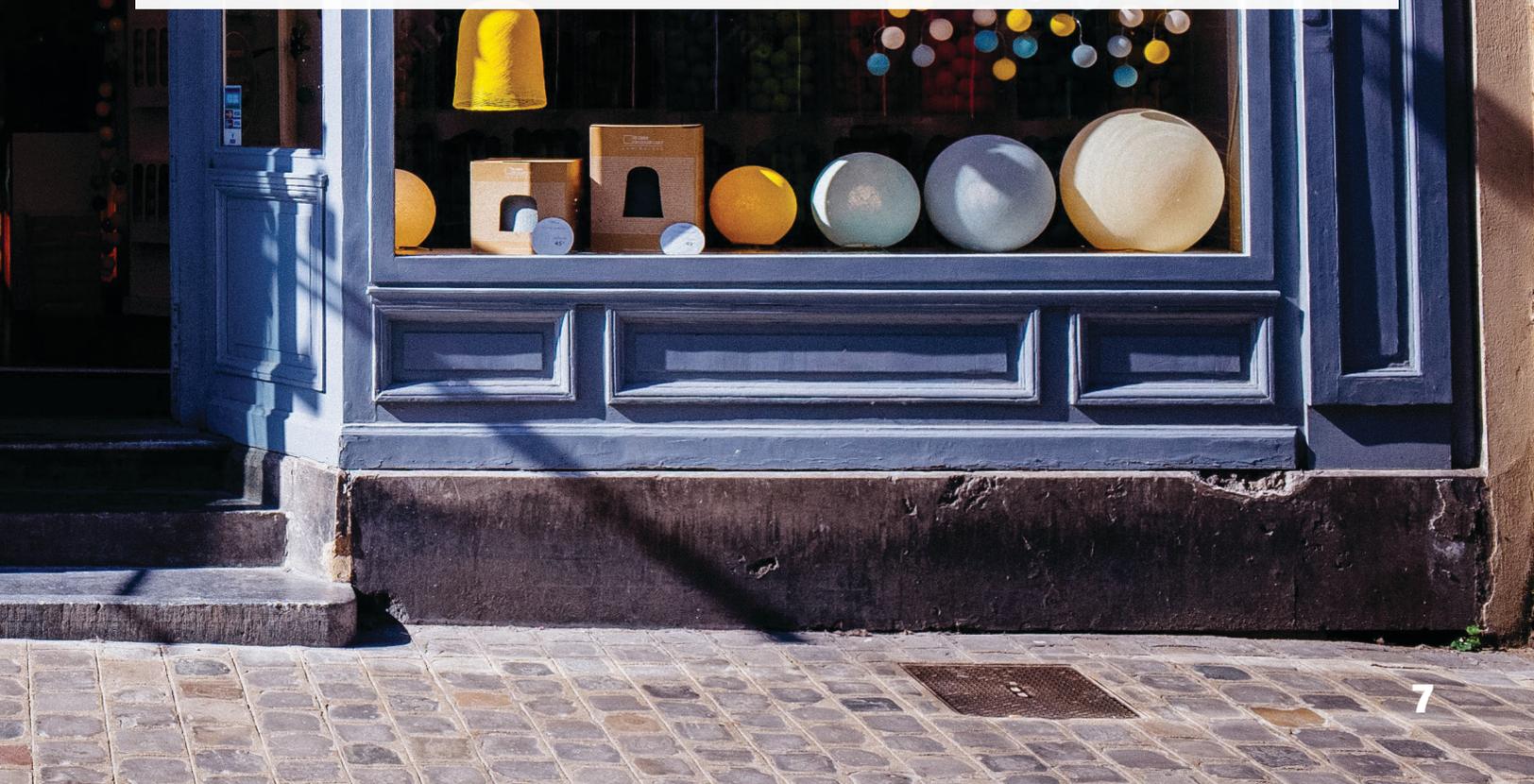
# ISSUES SPECIALISTS CAN HELP WITH

Specialists conduct onsite visits to address possible causes of pollution at businesses that generate small quantities of dangerous waste.

Specialists look closely at business practices, offer solutions to practices that could pollute the environment, and suggest alternatives to the hazardous materials that businesses use, store, and dispose of every day. Recommendations often contribute to a safer environment for employees and customers and can save the business money.

Their goal is to help businesses make changes to limit or eliminate potential pollution and reduce impacts to state waters. Specialists encounter many different types of wastes and sometimes draw on Ecology and other regulatory agency staff for their expertise in dealing with those wastes.

Partner jurisdictions attempt to resolve pollution problems locally, but in some cases, specialists refer the business to Ecology or another regulatory program for additional assistance.



# ISSUES AND RESOLUTION

In the 2019–2021 biennium, PPA specialists made 5,322 visits to small businesses. Those businesses with complex or high-priority issues received one or more follow-up visits from specialists. Specialists found a total of 2,811 issues. By the end of the biennium, they helped resolve 75 percent (2,122) of the issues. Despite business closure and physical-distancing restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, our PPA specialists made significant strides in reducing and preventing pollution.

The eight most common issues found during the 2019–2021 biennium:

- No or Inadequate Spill Response Materials — 431 Issues (15% of all issues)
- No or Inadequate Spill Response Procedures — 352 Issues (13%)
- Other Stormwater Related Issues — 210 (7%)
- Improper Housekeeping — 191 (7%)
- Lack of Spill Response Plan — 190 (7%)
- Improper Maintenance of Storm Drains — 185 (7%)
- Universal Waste Management Issues — 160 (7%)
- Secondary Containment for dangerous waste — 136 (5%)

During the 2019–2021 biennium, none of the eight most common issues listed above were considered high priority issues. In total, high-priority issues represented 20 percent of all issues found during business visits this biennium.

The top five most common high-priority issues found during the 2019–2021 biennium:

- Improper Storage of Products/Wastes — 113 (5%)
- Improperly Stored Dangerous Waste — 127 (5%)
- Waste Not Disposed of Properly — 97 (3%)
- Discharge of Process Wastewaters to Storm Drains — 85 (3%)
- Improperly Stored Containerized Materials — 65 (2%)

# TRAINING FOR PPA SPECIALISTS

Specialists must be aware of and communicate the regulatory requirements for handling many types of wastes and processes while understanding best management practices that apply to a wide range of businesses.

To support new and veteran PPA specialists, Ecology provides regular trainings. Semi-annual all-staff trainings give specialists a chance to learn about best management practices and regulatory updates. Ecology also facilitates eight to nine webinars per year. These webinars keep specialists up to date on changing regulations and introduce them to new topics. Partner jurisdictions or other agencies will often give presentations during the webinars, which allow for a wide array of learning topics and points of view.

In response to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, we redesigned our annual New Specialist Training, which was previously held over two days in person. We also made the change to be able to offer training to new specialists in a timely manner. For the 2020 training and beyond, Ecology (with the help of the PPA training committee for new specialists), developed a self-paced online modular training system for new specialists. In addition to the training modules, new specialists must participate in six live discussion panels held every other month. These discussion panels allow new trainees to ask questions and discuss various scenarios they may encounter with Ecology and our more experienced specialists.

Additionally, all specialists around the state have access to Ecology staff expertise, creating a broad system of information exchange and enhancing assistance to businesses. Specialists also have access to each other. Ecology provides contact information for all the specialists and happily facilitates these conversations. Communication between partners and Ecology allows for collaboration across the partnership between new and experienced specialists. No specialists are on their own—we are one big team!

# SECONDARY CONTAINMENT & SPILL KITS

## SECONDARY CONTAINMENT

Secondary containment is a very important part of spill prevention. Maybe you've seen secondary containment around but didn't know its purpose. Most often, it's the yellow pallet below drums of waste—it could also be the 5-gallon bucket used to collect smaller waste items. Secondary containment helps protect both the environment and businesses. Businesses that spend money on preventing spills and contamination up front are less likely to be involved in very expensive cleanup operations in the future. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of waste, and a business may be able to get one of these pallets for free by working with their local PPA specialist.

PPA specialists can help businesses by providing secondary containment, free of charge, in a couple of different ways. Specialists often provide pallets as seen in the photos below. These pallets are designed to capture any spills when wastes are being added to or removed from containers, or to collect any overflow if the containers become too full. Containing spills and catching overflow prevents dangerous waste from impacting the ground or surface water, and protects employees, customers, and the public from these wastes.

## Seattle Public Utilities

Here's an example of secondary containment provided by Seattle Public Utilities. In King County, businesses can apply for a voucher to help with the cost of purchasing secondary containment pallets and other items and services.



*Before: Without secondary containment, any oil spilled during adding/removing materials from the drums would spill to the ground, causing soil contamination.*



*After: With secondary containment, even if there is a spill or overflow, any spilled materials will be captured with the secondary containment pallet and can be properly managed.*

## City of Redmond

Sometimes it takes a little persistence. The next example comes from our specialists with the City of Redmond. They worked with a business to get secondary containment pallets for their hydraulic waste oil. The waste oil was next to their back door—an easy place for things to go wrong! City staff returned to visit with the business five times, for six total visits, but in the end, the business began using the secondary containment, protecting themselves, the environment, and their community.



*Before: With containers of used oil and other wastes located next to the back external door, there was plenty of opportunity for spills. People and vehicles coming in and out of the door could cause the oil and other waste to spill.*



*After: Containers moved to the other side of the door and placed on secondary containment pallet. Now, if there's a spill or overflow, any extra materials will be captured by the secondary containment pallet.*

## Skagit County

Our specialists in Skagit County worked with a local tire shop to address some spill and containment issues with secondary containment pallets.



*Before: The area lacked secondary containment. These drums were located next to stairs leading to the pit below. Spills in this area would be extra difficult to clean up.*



*After: With secondary containment, the chances of the oil spilling to the stairs and needing to be cleaned up is reduced.*

## City of Shoreline

City of Shoreline specialists also had the opportunity to work with an auto shop in their area to address secondary containment and storage of used oil.



*Before: They stored several drums of used oil outside without cover or secondary containment. Just asking for trouble!*



*After: Drums of used oil placed on secondary containment pallets and moved inside under cover. This is a cleaner and safer way to store used oil.*

## **Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department**

Our specialists from the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department helped a small vehicle repair shop address their used oil waste. The shop used a container that was too large for how much used oil they generated. Specialists helped the facility find appropriately sized containers and provided secondary containment for the new containers. They also provided a drum drain top to make adding used oil to containers easier and less likely to result in a spill.

These are just a few of the examples from the last biennium that show how our specialists help businesses with waste storage and secondary containment.

## **SPILL KITS**

Partners also help businesses with best management practices to avoid and respond to spills. During the 2019–2021 biennium partner jurisdictions distributed over 400 spill kits to businesses. Once the business has completed a spill response plan, specialists review the plan with the business and set up a date and time to drop off the spill kit.



# PARTNER SUCCESS STORIES

## CLARK COUNTY

Since industrial and commercial businesses faced many challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, PPA specialists in Clark County focused on increased collaboration with other public health programs. Recreational Water Safety, a division of Clark County Public Health, routinely inspects water quality, safety equipment and the physical conditions of all public swimming pools, spas, float tank facilities and recreational water features in Clark County.

At a local athletic club, an inspector noted that there was excessive corrosion of metal surfaces and electrical equipment in the chemical storage room. The corrosion was believed to be due to excessive fugitive emissions from the muriatic acid handling and feed system. The facility manager was referred to PPA to get help improving their chemical management practices.

Repairing the room ventilation system was too expensive, so the management decided to install a separate acid-resistant storage shed and move their containers into it. PPA specialists helped find better vapor-tight connectors for the acid drum feed lines. They also provided spill containment pallets to place the drums inside the shed. This solution provided proper containment and segregation between incompatible wastes.



*After: The new vapor-tight connector from the acid drum to the feed line.*



*After: The new covered storage with secondary containment for chemical management.*

## SPOKANE

What is a rage room? We got to find out, while also providing a bit of technical assistance to an emerging business model. Rage rooms are business locations that provide space and equipment to their customers to break various household items to relieve stress or frustration. Some business provide the items to be broken, while others let customers bring in their own items.

Our team responded to a complaint submitted to Ecology by a concerned citizen. They were worried that a new business in Spokane was allowing the public to break electronics as part of its rage room business model, which could potentially expose customers and employees to heavy metals and gas vapors.

Ecology asked Spokane Regional Health District (SRHD) to follow up with the facility on behalf of the PPA Partnership, and provide technical assistance to the business regarding waste management.

The timing worked out great in this instance. The business was just getting started and had not broken electronics at the time that SRHD followed up with them. The business was getting ready to purchase 172 televisions to break at their facility. Fortunately, they were advised against this by our PPA specialist and decided not to purchase them after our visit.

After speaking to our specialist and learning about the concerns and issues related to destroying electronics, the business owner updated their list of approved items and removed the listing of televisions and electronics. The owner also agreed to update the information on their website related to what items are acceptable and what items are not acceptable, removing TV's and any other

electronics. Additionally, the owner is going to stock a supply of Spokane-Kootenai Waste & Recycle Directory flyers so that when folks bring in items that are not allowed to be smashed, she can supply them with informational flyers about the waste directory to find an appropriate disposal options for prohibited items brought to the business.

Working with our specialists from SRHD, this business was able to prevent pollution and learn about the proper management of any waste they produce. Good timing, professional conduct, and a passion for pollution prevention led to this success story. Thank you Spokane Regional Health District!



*Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) provided by the business for customers to wear to protect themselves from flying debris.*



*Additional PPE provided by the business. Coveralls, hard hats, closed toe shoes (not provided by the business), and gloves are required before breaking items.*



*Room of breakable items for customers to choose from.*



*A room with debris left over from a rage room break session.*

## JEFFERSON COUNTY MARINAS

Since much of Jefferson County is rural they rely on ditches, swales, and limited catch basin systems to transport stormwater. Isolating contaminants and tracking them back to their source can be difficult, yet Jefferson County and the majority of its citizens make every effort to limit stormwater pollution.

One such effort in reducing pollution involved a unique cooperative effort between three agencies that resulted in four successful technical assistance visits to Jefferson County marinas. Our PPA specialists at Jefferson County Public Health worked with the Puget Soundkeeper Alliance, and Washington Sea Grant, as part of the Clean Marina program. Together, they visited four marinas located in Jefferson County.

The highlight of the collaborative fieldwork was working with a marina that had been unable to comply with water quality benchmarks for several years, but is now making great strides to address this issue.

Our specialists advised the marina in question to move oil collection away from the waterfront to a more centralized location. Oil collection is now covered, locked, and has an oil/water separator to capture stormwater runoff. Bilge water is collected and stored next to the oil collection and is stored in intermediate bulk containers (also called totes) with a covered funnel.

Specialists found other minor issues at the remaining three marinas. The representatives at these locations were receptive to our feedback and suggestions and were eager to bring their

marinas into compliance. They fixed many of the issues within a matter of days.

All in all, it was an incredible collection of like-minded entities working together to ensure that our Pacific Northwest waterways are as healthy as possible. Our specialists look forward to working with these groups again in the future to help only rain go down the drain.



*Signage posted near marinas in Jefferson County. Signs help educate the public about the impacts to the water from debris, dust, and spill-related issues.*



*Centralized oil collection location. Putting all the oil collection and management devices in one location lessens the impact from oil sitewide and means that there is only one place to worry about when it comes to oil management.*

## KING COUNTY

Our King County partner worked with several businesses over the last year on proper management, storage, and disposal of used cooking oil and grease. Improper management of this waste can contaminate the environment, lead to clogged pipes, and create a public health issue.

King County performed an initial pollution prevention visit at a local restaurant in February 2021. The specialist saw that the restaurant's used cooking oil container was full and there were grease spills nearby. The restaurant owner had placed uncovered 5-gallon buckets nearby to store even more used cooking lard. King County discussed the observations with the business owner and provided education on proper grease management. The business owner expressed difficulty in communicating with the grease vendor, who was, at the time, picking up grease from the property approximately every 2 weeks and not emptying the used cooking oil container during each visit. The business owner asked the vendor for more frequent pickups but was not receiving this service. King County and the owner agreed that King County would call the vendor to ask for more frequent pick-ups.

Over the following month, both King County and the business owner communicated with the grease vendor about more frequent pick-ups. Ultimately, the business owner decided to change grease vendors to improve the management of their grease. King County and the owner continued to communicate with the existing grease vendor to coordinate clean-up of the grease spills and removal of the existing used cooking oil container. All grease spills were cleaned up and

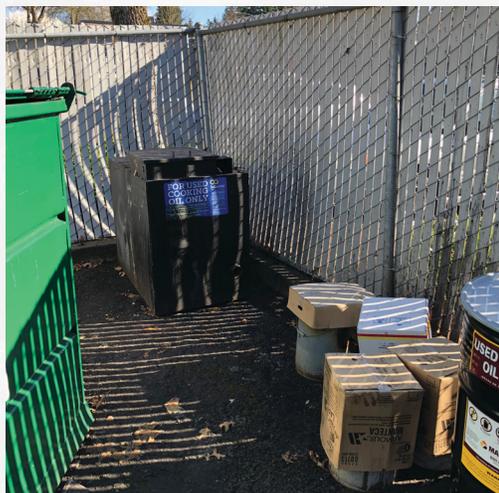
the business owner is now able to better manage his restaurant's used cooking lard, keeping this material off the ground and out of the stormwater system.



*Before: Fats, oils, and greases (F.O.G) being stored in open-top 5-gallon buckets. This type of storage increases the likelihood of spills to the environment. In this photo, you can see spilled F.O.G. next to the containers.*



*Before: Same photo from a different angle. You can see the clear signs of spillage on the container itself and the ground next to the container.*



*After: The F.O.G. collection container has been cleaned up, and the spill next to the container has been cleaned up.*



*After: The F.O.G. is now being collected in larger containers with securely fastened lids, greatly reducing the chances of spills or improper management.*

## BOTHELL VIRTUAL WORKSHOP CASE STUDY

The City of Bothell used some of their funding to hold a pollution prevention workshop for local businesses. When the COVID-19 Stay at Home order went into effect, it became clear that there would be new challenges associated with this workshop.

Taking advantage of additional office time available during the quarantine, specialists focused on the development of the workshop content. They chose landscapers as their audience and proper use and disposal of dangerous wastes and products as the content focus. Our specialists also decided to pursue both an online option (rather than an in-person workshop) as well as in-language translation for attendees that didn't speak English as a first language. Outreach to possible attendees began in June of 2020. Specialists contacted landscapers via phone for any business that had business listings in Bothell, as well as those that worked in Bothell.

The Bothell PPA team scheduled a virtual workshop for March 12, 2021. The workshop had five businesses in attendance and a total of seven attendees. Of those who attended, one participant spoke Spanish as a first language and another spoke Vietnamese. Each of those attendees were able to enter a breakout room in Zoom to receive the same training in their respective languages. Specialists felt like the workshop was successful and worth their time to offer, but due to the unique challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, it took creative thinking and networking to execute it fully.



# RESPONDING TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on when and how the PPA Partners worked with businesses on pollution prevention measures. For approximately 97% of this biennium, field work was curtailed due to the Governor's Stay-Home Stay-Healthy Proclamation followed by the continuing need to physical distance after the proclamation was lifted.

Additionally, our Partners needed to consider the impacts to the businesses they may visit. Businesses closed, lost revenue, and lost staff, so a visit from their local PPA specialist often wasn't their primary interest. However, despite this our PPA partners were still able to complete 89% of their proposed business technical assistance visits.

Many of our PPA Partners are local health jurisdictions, so they had to redirect their PPA staff to pandemic response duties such as COVID-19 contact tracing and business health and safety outreach. These partners found that the skills and experience developed through their PPA outreach transferred well to their pandemic outreach. For example, Skagit County Public Health developed and implemented a "COVID Business Assistance Program" to assist schools, workplaces, and other community organizations prevent and reduce further spread of COVID-19. Skagit's program used many of the same approaches and skills that are used to perform PPA visits.

During our work from home time, the partnership took on several projects to strengthen our future. Taking advantage of the extra time out of the field, we:

- Developed new education and outreach materials;
- Improved the look, branding, and message consistency throughout the partnership;
- Excelled at transitioning our training meetings to a virtual format;
- Utilized over 80% of our budget.

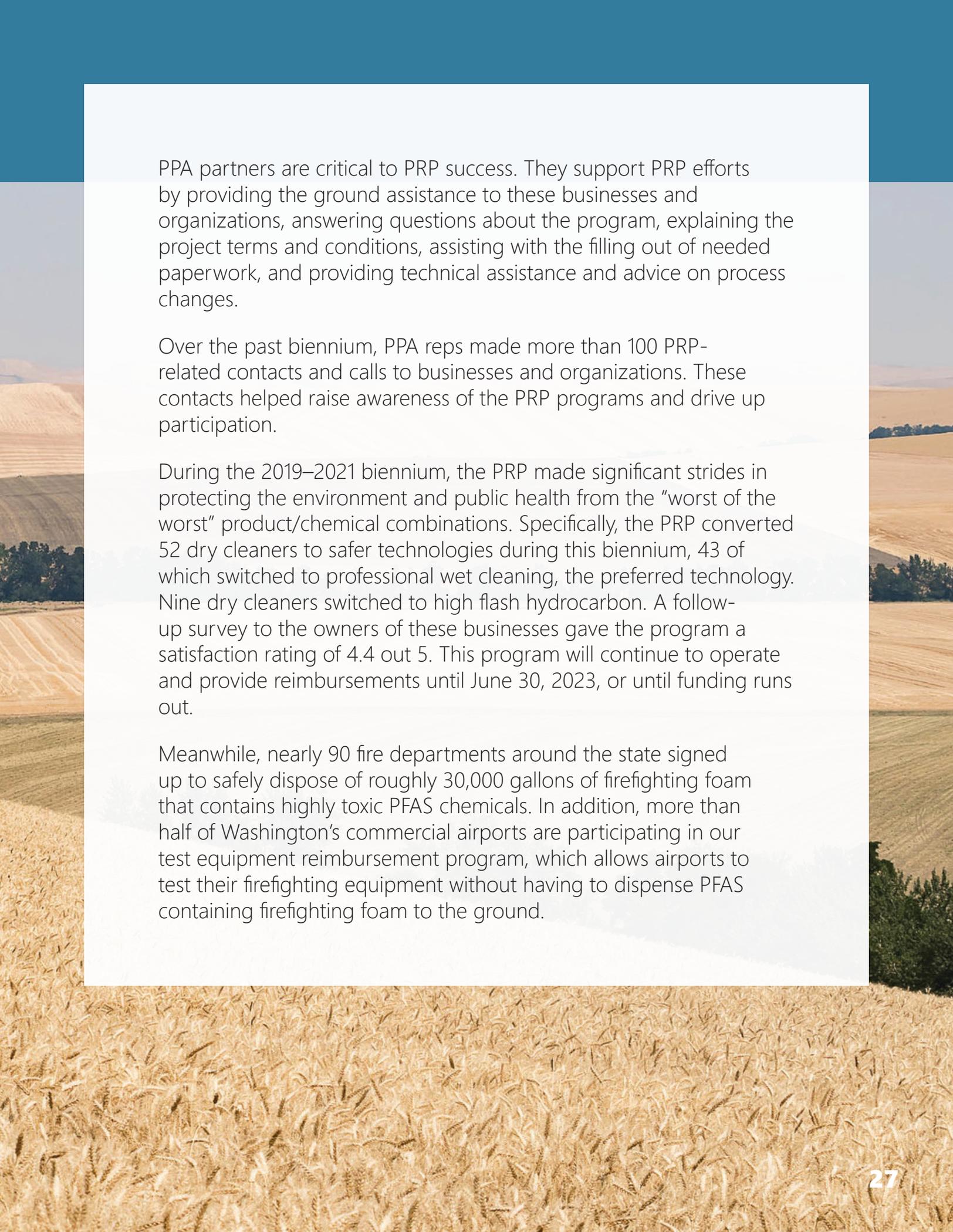
***“The events of the past several months have taught us the need to be innovative and flexible as we reprioritized our resources and worked within the limitations brought about by the pandemic.”***

***—Spokane Regional Health***

# PRODUCT REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

Our Product Replacement Program (PRP) is a cutting-edge, preventative program designed to identify and address the most problematic chemicals impacting our state. Through this program, we can proactively address these problems before they become much bigger and more costly. It provides:

- Reimbursement funding
- Collection and disposal services
- Opportunities for businesses to transition to less toxic options



PPA partners are critical to PRP success. They support PRP efforts by providing the ground assistance to these businesses and organizations, answering questions about the program, explaining the project terms and conditions, assisting with the filling out of needed paperwork, and providing technical assistance and advice on process changes.

Over the past biennium, PPA reps made more than 100 PRP-related contacts and calls to businesses and organizations. These contacts helped raise awareness of the PRP programs and drive up participation.

During the 2019–2021 biennium, the PRP made significant strides in protecting the environment and public health from the “worst of the worst” product/chemical combinations. Specifically, the PRP converted 52 dry cleaners to safer technologies during this biennium, 43 of which switched to professional wet cleaning, the preferred technology. Nine dry cleaners switched to high flash hydrocarbon. A follow-up survey to the owners of these businesses gave the program a satisfaction rating of 4.4 out 5. This program will continue to operate and provide reimbursements until June 30, 2023, or until funding runs out.

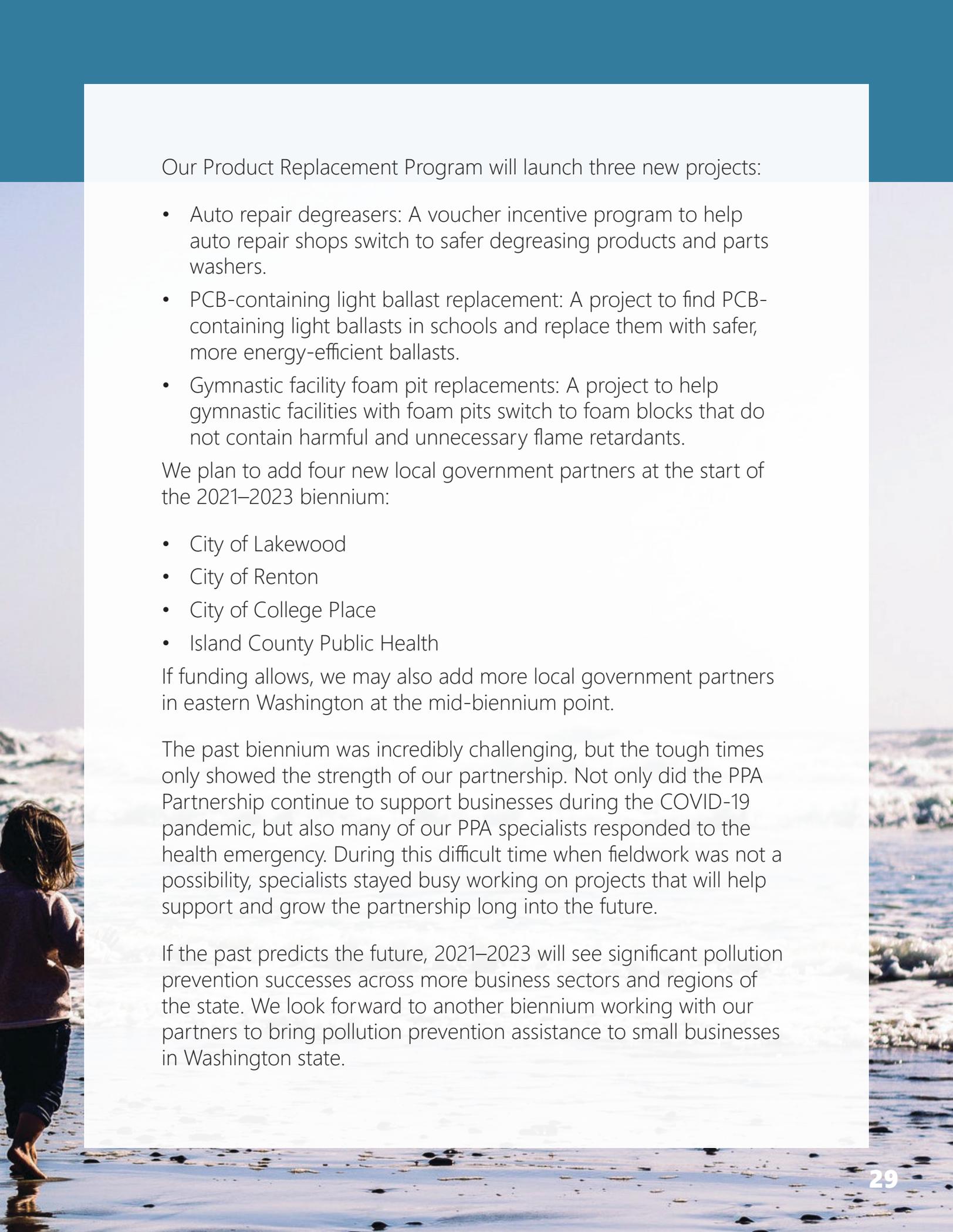
Meanwhile, nearly 90 fire departments around the state signed up to safely dispose of roughly 30,000 gallons of firefighting foam that contains highly toxic PFAS chemicals. In addition, more than half of Washington’s commercial airports are participating in our test equipment reimbursement program, which allows airports to test their firefighting equipment without having to dispense PFAS containing firefighting foam to the ground.

A person wearing a grey hoodie and light-colored pants is walking away from the camera on a dark, wet beach. They are carrying a pair of black shoes in their right hand and a green bottle in their left. The ocean waves are breaking in the background under a clear blue sky. The scene is captured from a low angle, emphasizing the person's presence in the natural environment.

# A LOOK FORWARD

During the 2021–2023 biennium, a committee will develop outreach videos to show examples of pollution prevention activities and best management practices businesses can use to reduce their environmental impact. The videos will be developed in multiple languages to ensure increased equity in our outreach.

To help businesses with the financial costs of implementing pollution prevention measures, we are also developing a “small changes” voucher program. This voucher, which is part of our Product Replacement Program, will reimburse businesses for some of the cost for materials and services such as secondary containment, spill kits, and catch basin cleaning.



Our Product Replacement Program will launch three new projects:

- Auto repair degreasers: A voucher incentive program to help auto repair shops switch to safer degreasing products and parts washers.
- PCB-containing light ballast replacement: A project to find PCB-containing light ballasts in schools and replace them with safer, more energy-efficient ballasts.
- Gymnastic facility foam pit replacements: A project to help gymnastic facilities with foam pits switch to foam blocks that do not contain harmful and unnecessary flame retardants.

We plan to add four new local government partners at the start of the 2021–2023 biennium:

- City of Lakewood
- City of Renton
- City of College Place
- Island County Public Health

If funding allows, we may also add more local government partners in eastern Washington at the mid-biennium point.

The past biennium was incredibly challenging, but the tough times only showed the strength of our partnership. Not only did the PPA Partnership continue to support businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic, but also many of our PPA specialists responded to the health emergency. During this difficult time when fieldwork was not a possibility, specialists stayed busy working on projects that will help support and grow the partnership long into the future.

If the past predicts the future, 2021–2023 will see significant pollution prevention successes across more business sectors and regions of the state. We look forward to another biennium working with our partners to bring pollution prevention assistance to small businesses in Washington state.



# ACCESSIBILITY

To request materials in a format for the visually impaired, contact the Hazardous Waste and Toxics Reduction Program at 360-407-6700 or [hwtrpubs@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:hwtrpubs@ecy.wa.gov). Persons with impaired hearing may call Washington Relay Service at 711. Persons with a speech disability may call TTY at 877-833-6341.