



Living in the Tacoma Smelter Plume

Questions? Contact us!

Ecology and our county health partner are here to answer your questions. Staff will return all calls by the next business day.

Health Information and Soil Sampling

Public Health – Seattle & King County
206-477-DIRT (3478)
dirtalert@kingcounty.gov
www.kingcounty.gov/tsp



Residential Yard Sampling and Cleanup Program

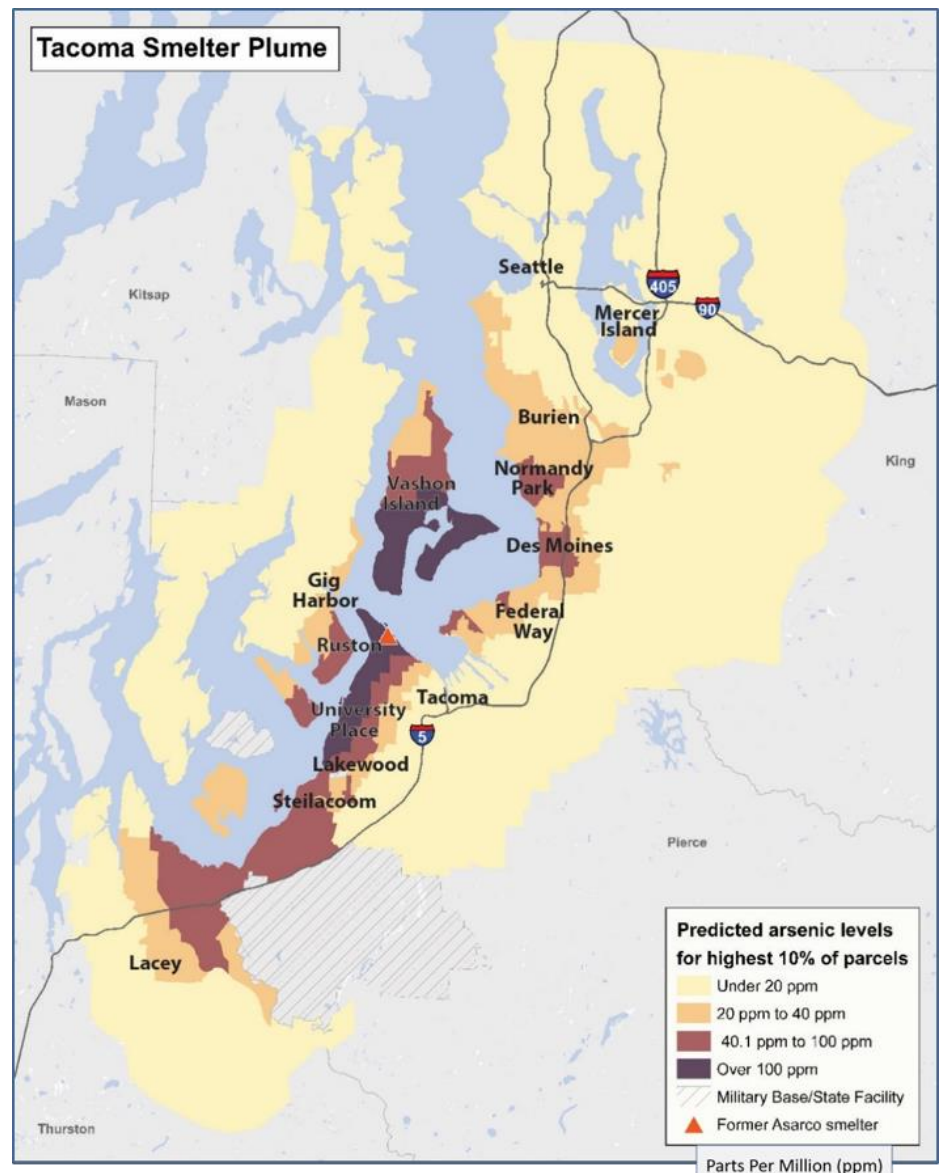
Department of Ecology

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Arsenic and Lead in King and Pierce Counties

You are receiving this newsletter because you live within the area of the Tacoma Smelter Plume. For nearly 100 years, Asarco operated a copper smelter in north Tacoma. Air pollution from the smelter settled on the surface soil across more than 1,000 square miles of the Puget Sound region. **Arsenic, lead, and other metals remain in the soil because of this pollution.** This newsletter contains important cleanup and public health information for renters, homeowners, and all who live, work, and play in the plume.





Risk to Human Health

People may breathe in dust or accidentally swallow soil containing arsenic and lead. These actions can contribute to health problems, especially in children.

- Lead is linked to developmental disabilities in children and may affect IQ.
- Arsenic may cause some types of cancers later in life and contributes to heart disease.
- Children under age six are at greatest risk because they put things into their mouths.

There is no immediate danger,
but long-term, daily
exposure raises the risk
of health problems.

What We Are Doing To Protect Your Community

In 2009, the State of Washington received settlement funding from Asarco to expand upon the cleanup work started by the Environmental Protection Agency in the 1990s. With this fund, we lead a cleanup strategy consisting of three programs: Soil Safety, Residential Yard Sampling and Cleanup, and Dirt Alert.

Soil Safety Program

The Soil Safety Program works with licensed childcares, parks, and schools to protect children by performing soil safety actions. We have sampled and tested over 1,000 existing play areas with local health departments in King, Pierce, and Thurston counties. Of the areas tested, we found over 100 areas with elevated arsenic or lead levels and completed soil safety actions on 90 percent of them. Examples of soil safety actions include:

- removing contaminated soil
- replacing it with clean soil
- covering soil with wood chips or gravel, and
- placing informational signs.



You can view actions in your neighborhood at the Dirt Alert Map link below. To learn more about the Soil Safety Program, visit <https://bit.ly/Soil-Safety>

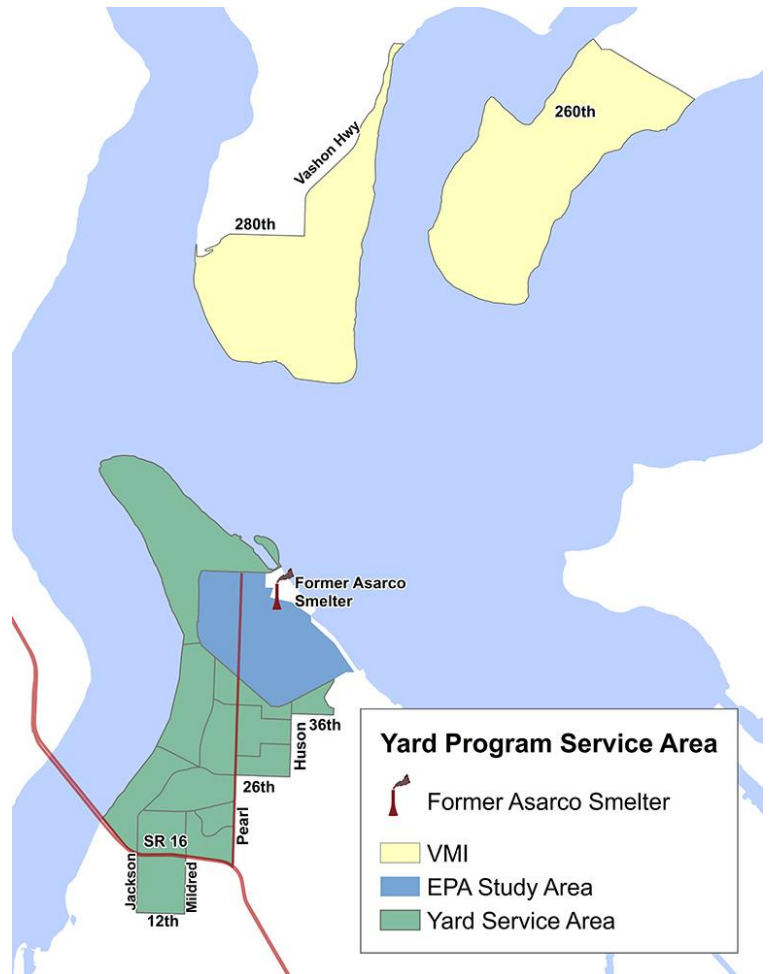


Residential Yard Sampling & Cleanup Program (Yard Program)

The Yard Program is a **voluntary** program available to **eligible** properties in the Yard Program Service Area. At people's homes, we test soil for arsenic and lead. If levels are too high, we replace the soil for free."

To learn more about the Yard Program, visit <https://bit.ly/Yard-Program>. You can use the Dirt Alert Map link below to determine your property's eligibility, view available sampling results, and download cleanup records if your property has had soil replaced.

A large number of the soil replacement properties are in Pierce County, but the service area extends into King County, primarily on South Vashon-Maury Island (VMI). We have sampled over 767 properties on VMI. We have offered clean up on 53 properties and 35 are completed.



Dirt Alert! Program

Dirt Alert! is our awareness program with King and Pierce County Health Departments. Dirt Alert! provides information, resources, and outreach to communities living in the Tacoma Smelter Plume. The Dirt Alert Map shows:

- where we tested soil,
- which properties qualified for soil replacement, and
- which properties, schools, and parks had their soil replaced.

Visit the
Dirt Alert Map

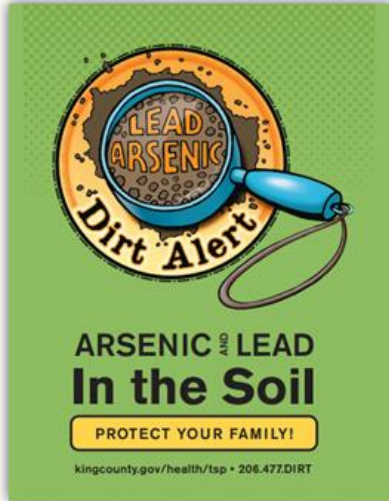
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with your smart
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link in your web
browser:



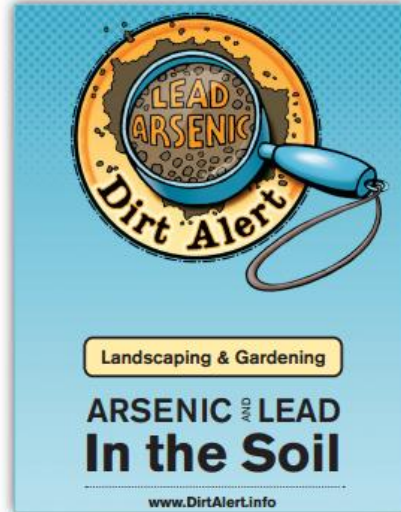
SCAN ME

www.ecology.wa.gov/DirtAlert

Learn more about arsenic and lead with our online resources and brochures:



Learn about arsenic and lead in the soil in the Tacoma Smelter Plume and the risk to human health. Included is a list of *Healthy Actions* that you and your family can do to reduce contact with arsenic and lead in dirt.



Reduce your contact with arsenic and lead in dirt while landscaping and gardening: Grow produce in raised beds, wash and peel fruits and vegetables, cover bare patches of soil, remove and replace soil.

Visit the King County website for these and other brochures: <https://tinyurl.com/BrochuresTSP>

Community Partners:

PHSKC is currently working with these organizations to educate communities about the risks of arsenic and lead:



<https://www.hoas.org/>



<https://www.ircw.org/>



<https://www.somalihealthboard.org/>



<https://www.cultivatesouthpark.org/>

Childcare provider or educator? Contact us and use these tools: <https://tinyurl.com/ChildrenKC>

To learn about resident protocol for self-testing soil: <https://tinyurl.com/SoilSampleKC>

What does Public Health Seattle King County do?

King County Dirt Alert provides outreach and education through community events and presentations. We offer free educational materials and giveaways for children, parents, teachers, and gardeners in multiple languages. If you have an event or want to schedule a presentation, contact us at 206-477-DIRT (3478).

Translated newsletters available

Để đọc thông tin này bằng tiếng Việt, vui lòng truy cập trang mạng của chúng tôi tại: <https://dirtalert.info/>

要閱讀中文郵件，請訪問我們的網站: <https://dirtalert.info/>

이 우편물의 한국어 버전을 보시려면 다음 웹사이트를 방문하세요: <https://dirtalert.info/>

Para leer este anuncio en español, visite nuestro sitio web en: <https://dirtalert.info/>

What Healthy Actions can we practice to protect ourselves?

- **Wash** hands after playing or working outside.



- Don't track arsenic and lead into your home—**take shoes off!**
- If children crawl or play on the floor in your home, dirt can get on their hands and in their mouths.
- **Vacuum** and damp dust often.
- Keep children's toys, teethingers, and pacifiers clean, to keep dirt off hands and out of mouths.



- **Grow** fruits and vegetables in raised beds with clean soil.
- **Wash** all fruits and vegetables before eating.
- **Peel** root vegetables like carrots and potatoes.



- **Cover** bare patches in your yard with grass, groundcover, or mulch.



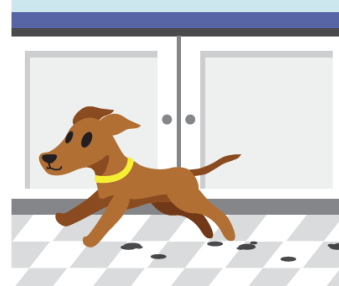
- **Wear** gloves and shoes when you garden. Take them off and wash your hands well when you are done.



- **Wear** a dust mask when mowing in dry conditions.
- **Wet** dry soil when working in garden beds to avoid breathing in dust.



- **Wipe** pet's paws when they come inside, whether wet or dry.





Toxics Cleanup Program
PO Box 47775
Olympia, WA 98504-77



Enjoying our yards in the summer

Summer is a time to go outside to play and work in our yards—to enjoy working in the garden, planting flowers, landscaping, and maybe pulling a few weeds. This newsletter will update you on our cleanup efforts in the Tacoma Smelter Plume and remind you of Healthy Actions you can take to protect your family.

To request an ADA accommodation, contact Ecology by phone at 360-485-5340 or email at matt.fuller@ecy.wa.gov, or visit <https://ecology.wa.gov/accessibility>. For Relay Service or TTY, call 711 or 877-833-6341.