



## **Response to Comments: U.S. Navy Keyport**

**Naval Undersea Warfare Center,  
Division Keyport  
610 Dowell Street  
Keyport, Washington 98345**

**ID Number: WA1170023419**

**Hazardous Waste and Toxics Reduction Program  
Washington State Department of Ecology  
Northwest Region Office  
Shoreline, Washington**

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- Cleanup site ID: 128

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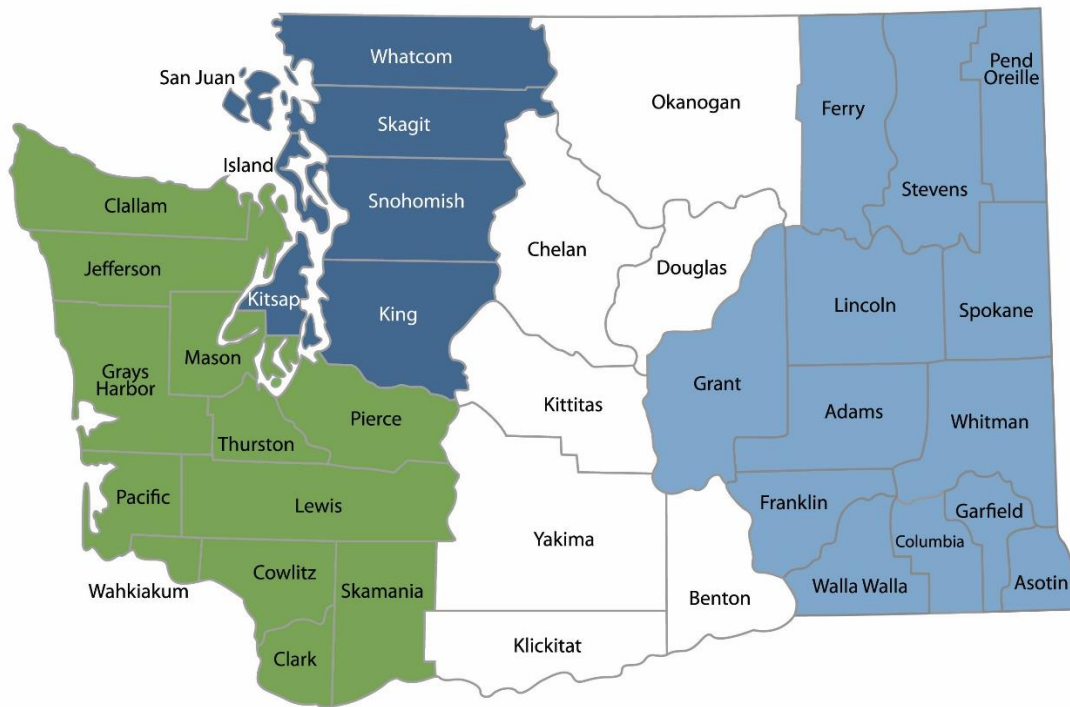
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<sup>1</sup> [ecology.wa.gov/contact](https://ecology.wa.gov/contact)

<sup>2</sup> [ecology.wa.gov/accessibility](https://ecology.wa.gov/accessibility)

# Department of Ecology's Region Offices

## Map of Counties Served



<b>Southwest Region</b> 360-407-6300	<b>Northwest Region</b> 206-594-0000	<b>Central Region</b> 509-575-2490	<b>Eastern Region</b> 509-329-3400
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Region	Counties served	Mailing Address	Phone
<b>Southwest</b>	Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Mason, Lewis, Pacific, Pierce, Skamania, Thurston, Wahkiakum	PO Box 47775 Olympia, WA 98504	360-407-6300
<b>Northwest</b>	Island, King, Kitsap, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, Whatcom	PO Box 330316 Shoreline, WA 98133	206-594-0000
<b>Central</b>	Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Kittitas, Klickitat, Okanogan, Yakima	1250 W Alder St Union Gap, WA 98903	509-575-2490
<b>Eastern</b>	Adams, Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Walla Walla, Whitman	4601 N Monroe Spokane, WA 99205	509-329-3400
<b>Headquarters</b>	Across Washington	PO Box 47600 Olympia, WA 98504	360-407-6000

# Response to Comments

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## U.S. Navy Keyport Dangerous Waste Permit and Public Participation Plan

Keyport, Washington

Hazardous Waste and Toxics Reduction Program  
Washington State Department of Ecology  
Northwest Region Office  
Shoreline, Washington

**August 2024**  
**Publication 24-04-041**



DEPARTMENT OF  
**ECOLOGY**  
State of Washington

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# Public Outreach Summary

## Site overview

The Naval Undersea Warfare Center, Division Keyport (NUWC Keyport) is part of Naval Base Kitsap. At NUWC Keyport, the U.S. Navy (Navy) tests, evaluates, and refurbishes undersea warfare systems and their components. The base generates dangerous waste from those activities. Within 90 days, accumulated dangerous waste must be moved to the permitted on-site dangerous waste storage facility (the “TSD facility” or “facility”). At NUWC Keyport, this facility is in a single building called “building 1051.” Some waste treatment also occurs in this permitted building.

By following permit requirements, the Navy can store wastes there for up to one year. The facility can also accept waste from other military bases if they follow the permit conditions. The Navy stores dangerous wastes in the permitted building until they send them off site for treatment and recycling or disposal. Dangerous waste management that requires a permit is done only in this building. The facility does not incinerate or dispose of any dangerous wastes on the base.

Previously, the Navy had a different facility at NUWC Keyport, permitted under “interim status” since November 1980. In 1990, Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology, we) determined that the location was not suitable for a permanent facility. It was over an old landfill that needed to be cleaned up. In 1994, the Navy built a new building strictly for dangerous waste management. In 2007, the facility was permitted by Ecology to operate as a TSD facility.

This permit allows the Navy to keep operating the TSD facility in building 1051. They will continue to accept and store the same types of wastes as they have been for years. The permit allows them to store 130,180 gallons of wastes. Storage includes 85,180 gallons in containers and 45,000 gallons in tanks.

When the facility has accumulated enough waste to make shipment economical, the waste will be sent off site to a permitted TSD for proper treatment and recycling or disposal.

NUWC Keyport’s permitted facility accepts and manages a wide range of wastes, including:

- Flammable and combustible wastes (fuel wastes).
- Corrosive wastes (acids or bases; non-neutral pH).
- Reactive wastes (physical shock or exposure to water or air can explode reactive wastes).
- Toxic wastes (poisonous).
- Oily wastes.
- Polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) wastes (may cause cancer).
- Industrial waste waters.
- Solids and sludges.
- Contaminated debris/universal waste (alkaline batteries, florescent lamps for recycling).

We reviewed the permit application to make sure that all areas used for waste management met design standards for dangerous waste facilities. The permit has detailed conditions on how the areas are used, inspected, and maintained.

The permitted facility accepts wastes at a single receiving area that has coated concrete secondary containment. The facility sorts waste to make sure that wastes that could react with each other are kept separate. Facility personnel move the waste containers to the long-term storage area within two working days.

The facility also receives bulk shipments of wastes in the receiving area. There are nine dangerous waste tanks used to store these wastes. Before adding bulk waste to a tank, they must verify that the waste is compatible with waste already in that tank. This is to avoid dangerous reactions.

In addition to waste storage, NUWC Keyport can use their tanks to treat wastewater that is dangerous waste. They must ensure the treated wastewater meets standards in their wastewater permit before sending it for additional treatment and discharge at the Central Kitsap Wastewater Treatment Plant in Brownsville.

The facility has a shipping area used to prepare for off-base shipment of containerized waste.

## Actions by Ecology

We held a public comment period from April 8 to June 14, 2024, to receive feedback on NUWC Keyport's [draft TSD permit](#)<sup>3</sup> and [draft public participation plan](#).<sup>4</sup>

Ecology's public involvement activities related to the comment period included:

- **Public notice mailer:**
  - United States mail distribution notices providing information about the permit documents and the public comment period. We sent this notice to approximately 2,964 addresses.
  - The [public notice mailer is also available digitally](#).<sup>5</sup>
- **Legal notice:**
  - Publication of paid display newspaper ad in the Kitsap Sun on April 8, 2024.
- **Site Register:**
  - Publication of notice in Ecology's Site Register:
    - Comment Period Notice:
      - May 2, 2024
  - Visit [Ecology's Site Register webpage](#)<sup>6</sup> to download PDFs of the notice.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/cleanupsearch/site/128#site-documents>

<sup>4</sup> <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/SummaryPages/2404012.html>

<sup>5</sup> <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/SummaryPages/2404011.html>

<sup>6</sup> <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/UIPages/PublicationList.aspx?IndexTypeName=Program&NameValue=Toxics+Cleanup&DocumentTypeName=Newsletter>

- **Social Media coverage:**
  - Posted on X and Facebook on April 8, 2024.
  - Paid advertising on Facebook from April 24 to 29, 2024.
- **Email subscribers:**
  - On April 5, 2024, Ecology emailed approximately 1,000 subscribers about the NUWC Keyport permit comment period.
- **Websites:**
  - Ecology announced the public comment period and made the review documents available on Ecology’s [NUWC Keyport](#)<sup>7</sup> webpage.
- **Document repositories:**
  - Copies of the review documents and public notice mailer were available for review at the Northwest Region Office of Ecology.
  - Outreach materials also directed the public to contact Janelle Anderson, Outreach Planner, for document review assistance.

## Comments and Responses

From April 8 to June 14, 2024, we invited public comments on the draft permit and draft public participation plan for NUWC Keyport. We received 14 comments during the comment period.

The comments we received are repeated here verbatim, along with our responses.

### Comment 1 (members of the public)

Currently I believe there is refuse burning on base. It is particularly obnoxious in the summertime when temperatures are warm enough to open windows on warm nights. I like to put a fan in my 2nd floor bedroom window to bring in cool air. There are many nights, especially on weekends when I wake up and have to shut down because the air stinks and impairs breathing. If your new facility replaces this practice, I’d be all for it. Currently, I believe the practice violates any number of ordinances.

### Response 1

Burning of dangerous waste is not allowed by this permit at the U.S. Navy’s Keyport facility (NUWC Keyport). This permit is for the storage and treatment of dangerous waste. Treatment of dangerous waste is only permitted under the conditions outlined in the permit.

### Comment 2 (members of the public)

Currently, the base hosts some sort of motorcycle qualification course. When this is happening, the noise is a constant barrage of people yelling, clapping, and engines revving. It sounds like a

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<sup>7</sup> <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/cleanupsearch/site/128>



Hell's Angels rally. It goes on all day sometimes. This is very disturbing. If your new facility replaces the motorcycle course, I'm all for it.

## Response 2

Thank you for your comment. This is beyond the scope of NUWC Keyport's TSD permit.

## Comment 3 (members of the public)

The daily National Anthem is way too loud. In the summer when my windows are open, it is louder than any stereo or TV would be run in my home. Years ago, the music was played closer to the bay and could barely be heard. The enunciation improvements on base make sure the music can be heard miles, and miles away from the base. Anyone else playing music this loud would be in violation of local ordinances.

## Response 3

Thank you for your comment. This is beyond the scope of NUWC Keyport's TSD permit.

## Comment 4 (members of the public)

The weekly (and more) testing of the emergency siren blast is another huge problem. It is enough to frighten any animal or child and deafen anyone else. I've had to cover my ears many times when I've been working outside. There has to be a better way or better sound.

## Response 4

Thank you for your comment. This is beyond the scope of NUWC Keyport's TSD permit.

## Comment 5 (members of the public)

In your mailing, under the heading "Protective permit conditions" there is the following statement - "During our review of the permit application, we ensured that all areas used for waste management met design standards for dangerous waste facilities." My question is twofold. Firstly, did ecy inspect these facilities? If not, who inspects them and what are their qualifications for doing so. Would appreciate some feedback.

## Response 5

All sections of the permit have been reviewed by Ecology's permit team. The permit team includes a permit analyst, permit engineer, compliance specialist, and inspectors. This team has reviewed all permit documents and determined that it complies with all applicable dangerous waste regulations listed in [WAC 173-303](#).<sup>8</sup>

All federal TSD facilities, such as NUWC Keyport, are also inspected for permit compliance annually by our Hazardous Waste and Toxics Reduction Program regional inspectors. Our

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<sup>8</sup> <https://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=173-303>

inspectors have a compliance training curriculum they must complete. Many also have additional training through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency or other organizations.

### **Comment 6 (members of the public)**

Grant the permit at Keyport.

### **Response 6**

Thank you for your comment.

### **Comment 7 (members of the public)**

Most of the buildings of Keyport generate toxic metal and chemical waste. That waste gets transported from all over Keyport to building 1051 (which is quite close to local waters). While in transit, there is an ever present potential for waste materials to be spilled.

If a spillage should occur, common Washington weather (rain and storms) can move that waste into the Sound, either directly or through the numerous sewer grates across Keyport, which empty directly into the Puget Sound.

Given that the Navy has a long history of polluting local waters and then trying to hide that fact, they should not be permitted to maintain toxic materials without objective non-Keyport/non-Navy oversight over the hazardous waste management. Something in the form of an on-site team of environmental oversight personnel.

### **Response 7**

The Navy is responsible for complying with all permit conditions identified in any permits it is required to have. This includes any federal, state, or county permits. Compliance for each permit will be assessed by the agency that issued the permit.

For this state-issued TSD permit, the Navy is required to contain, mitigate, clean up, and notify Ecology of any spills of dangerous waste. These requirements are listed in the permit. Failure to comply with permit conditions may result in enforcement actions by Ecology and/or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

### **Comment 8 (members of the public)**

How much longer does the Navy want to store dangerous waste from the 90 days they currently have? I see they can store wastes up to one year after they have been moved from the storage areas/tanks, why the need to store longer than 90 days before being moved?

### **Response 8**

Within 90 days, dangerous waste from activities on base must be moved to a permitted dangerous waste storage facility (that is, building 1051, the TSD facility). We refer to the permitted building as a "facility." Some waste treatment also occurs in the permitted facility. By following all permit requirements, the Navy can store wastes in the facility for up to one year. This allows for economical shipment of the waste to a disposal facility off site.

## **Comment 9 (members of the public)**

How is the cleanup of existing Environmental contamination coming along after 35 years? We certainly don't want to add to that.

### **Response 9**

Keyport has a closed landfill onsite that is subject to cleanup requirements. The construction part of the cleanup has been successful, and the site is now in the performance monitoring stage to ensure that the cleanup continues to be effective.

We believe the proposed permit is protective of human health and the environment if followed as written. This permit includes steps that must be taken in the event of a spill or accidental release. It also includes steps required if the Navy decides to close this permitted facility.

More information can be found at Ecology's [US Navy Keyport website](#).<sup>9</sup>

## **Comment 10 (members of the public)**

Is there another entity who monitors that the Navy is following all permit requirements?

### **Response 10**

The Navy is responsible for complying with all permit conditions identified in any permits it is required to have. This includes any federal, state, or county permits. Compliance for each permit will be assessed by the agency that issued the permit.

## **Comment 11 (members of the public)**

Appears Keyport is built mainly on fill and is shown as a high liquefaction susceptibility area on Kitsap County hazardous map. Based on location, sticking out into a water channel the way it does, it seems it would be very susceptible to flooding by a tsunami event (bathtub effect).

### **Response 11**

The permit includes a formal contingency plan used for responding to emergencies in the waste management building. The plan has specific response procedures for emergencies, such as explosions, fires, spills, or releases. The permit has clear criteria about what incidents must be reported to Ecology immediately. It also outlines what incidents must use the contingency plan procedures. These criteria are in the permit's contingency plan.

The Navy must respond to explosions, fires, spills, or releases of hazardous substance that occur on the base. However, they only use the permit's contingency plan for emergencies threatening the dangerous waste facility. The Navy has separate emergency plans for the rest of the base.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/cleanupsearch/site/127>

## Comment 12 (members of the public)

The permit appears to be for a needed Operations and Maintenance (O&M) program that maintains the safety of the cleanup storage areas and other affected places.

I support the continued issuing of this permit by Washington State Department of Ecology, since it ensures that the contaminants remain safely stored.

I own a large, 60-acre organic farm. It is located as the crow flies about one and one-half miles from this area, and it's continued safely at the U.S. Navy: Naval Undersea Warfare Center Division (NUWC) Keyport Site is of concern and benefit to us.

## Response 12

Thank you for your comment.

## Comment 13 (members of the public)

Storage of toxic waste should not exceed 14 days. If you don't have a disposal plan in place when you produce the waste you cannot be trusted to produce the waste responsibly. I live locally and my husband has a rare form of cancer that may be caused by exposure to these type of materials. He is too sick and I am too tired to go down the "whose fault is it" route. But we are not too sick and tired to scream "This has to stop!". (Underline "has", use bold and italics too.) thank you for the opportunity to speak up.

## Response 13

Thank you for your comment. Provided that the Navy complies with all the requirements listed in this permit, we believe the permit to be protective of human health and the environment. The permit is based on the State Dangerous Waste Regulations, including specific requirements for spills and discharges into the environment. These requirements are listed in [WAC 173-303-145](#).<sup>10</sup> Failure to comply with the regulations or permit conditions may result in enforcement actions by Ecology or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

## Comment 14 (members of the public)

I support the permit request for continued safe storage of haz waste at Keyport.

## Response 14

Thank you for your comment.

## Next Steps

We carefully reviewed and considered each comment we received.

After considering the comments, we finalized the draft documents without further changes.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://app.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=173-303-145>

# Abbreviations and Acronyms

**ADA**

Americans with Disabilities Act

**CAP**

Cleanup Action Plan

**Cleanup**

Actions taken to protect public health and the environment from the effects of environmental contamination.

**Ecology**

Washington State Department of Ecology

**EPA**

United States Environmental Protection Agency

**MTCA**

Model Toxics Control Act

**NUWC Keyport**

Naval Undersea Warfare Center, Division Keyport (part of Naval Base Kitsap)

**PPP, Plan**

Public participation plan

**RCRA**

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act

**SEPA**

State Environmental Policy Act

**Site**

Area where hazardous substances are located.

**TSD**

Treatment, storage, and disposal facility

**WAC**

Washington Administrative Code