

WA DNR Webster Nursery: Public Comment Period on Removing Site from the Contaminated Sites List

Address: 9805 Blomberg St SW, Tumwater
Facility Site ID: 8786341 Cleanup Site ID: 3380

We are accepting comments from
Thursday October 2nd at 8:00 AM to
Monday November 3rd at 11:59 PM.

Submit your comment:

Online (preferred):

Scan the QR code or go to
go.ecology.wa.gov/comment3380

By mail or email:

Steve Teel
Toxics Cleanup Program
PO Box 47775
Olympia, WA 98504-7775
steve.teel@ecy.wa.gov



More Information

Project Website: go.ecology.wa.gov/3380

Questions? Please reach out to Steve Teel, site manager, at steve.teel@ecy.wa.gov or 360-890-0059.

Public meeting: To request a public meeting, email steve.teel@ecy.wa.gov. We will hold a meeting if 10 or more people ask for one.

Read Documents In Person:

Tumwater Timberland Library
7023 New Market Street,
Tumwater, WA 98501

Ecology Lacey office *by appointment only
300 Desmond Drive SE
Lacey, WA 98503

PublicDisclosureSWRO@ecy.wa.gov
360-407-6365

Summary

Webster Nursery is a 300-acre tree nursery run by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The nursery grows and sells 9 million seedlings each year.

In the past, the nursery used organochlorine pesticides, including chlordane and heptachlor. These chemicals were very effective at killing insects but are also toxic to human health. The nursery has not used insecticides since the early 1990s.

In 1996 when DNR found that an underground storage tank leaked pesticides into soil and groundwater, Ecology added this site to the Contaminated Sites List

Now, contamination is below cleanup levels, and Ecology is ready to remove this site from the Contaminated Sites List. We will consider public input before making a final decision.



Figure 1. The leaking underground storage tank was behind a warehouse building in the southeast corner of the nursery property. DNR removed the tank in 1996.

How this site became contaminated

DNR built a pesticide storage warehouse in 1978. The warehouse had floor drains that connected to a concrete underground storage tank a few feet south of the building. In 1982, DNR replaced the original concrete underground storage tank with a steel tank. Over time, the steel tank filled and began leaking pesticides into the ground.

Cleanup Work

DNR did cleanup work at this site in 1996 and 2018. Some contaminated soil deeper in the ground was left behind during cleanup for structural stability of the warehouse.

In 1996, DNR:

- Removed the underground storage tank.
- Excavated about 70 cubic yards (about 7 dump trucks full) of contaminated soil.
- Disposed the liquid in the tank.
- Disposed of the contaminated soil off-site.

In 2018, DNR:

- Excavated about 145 cubic yards (about 14 dump trucks full) of contaminated soil.
- Disposed the contaminated soil off-site.



Figure 2. A photo from the excavation work in 2018. Over 10 feet of contaminated soil were excavated from the area behind the warehouse, near the underground storage tank site.

Groundwater Sampling

Groundwater is water in the ground. Groundwater fills tiny spaces in dirt, gravel, or cracks in rocks. The leaking tank caused pesticides to enter soil and groundwater near the warehouse.

Groundwater monitoring wells showed that pesticide contamination never left the property. Thurston County Health Department and Washington Department of Health sampled nearby wells and did not find pesticides above lab reporting limits.

Ecology analyzed data from two groundwater wells at the site. Now, after many years of monitoring, Ecology is satisfied that groundwater at the site meets cleanup standards.

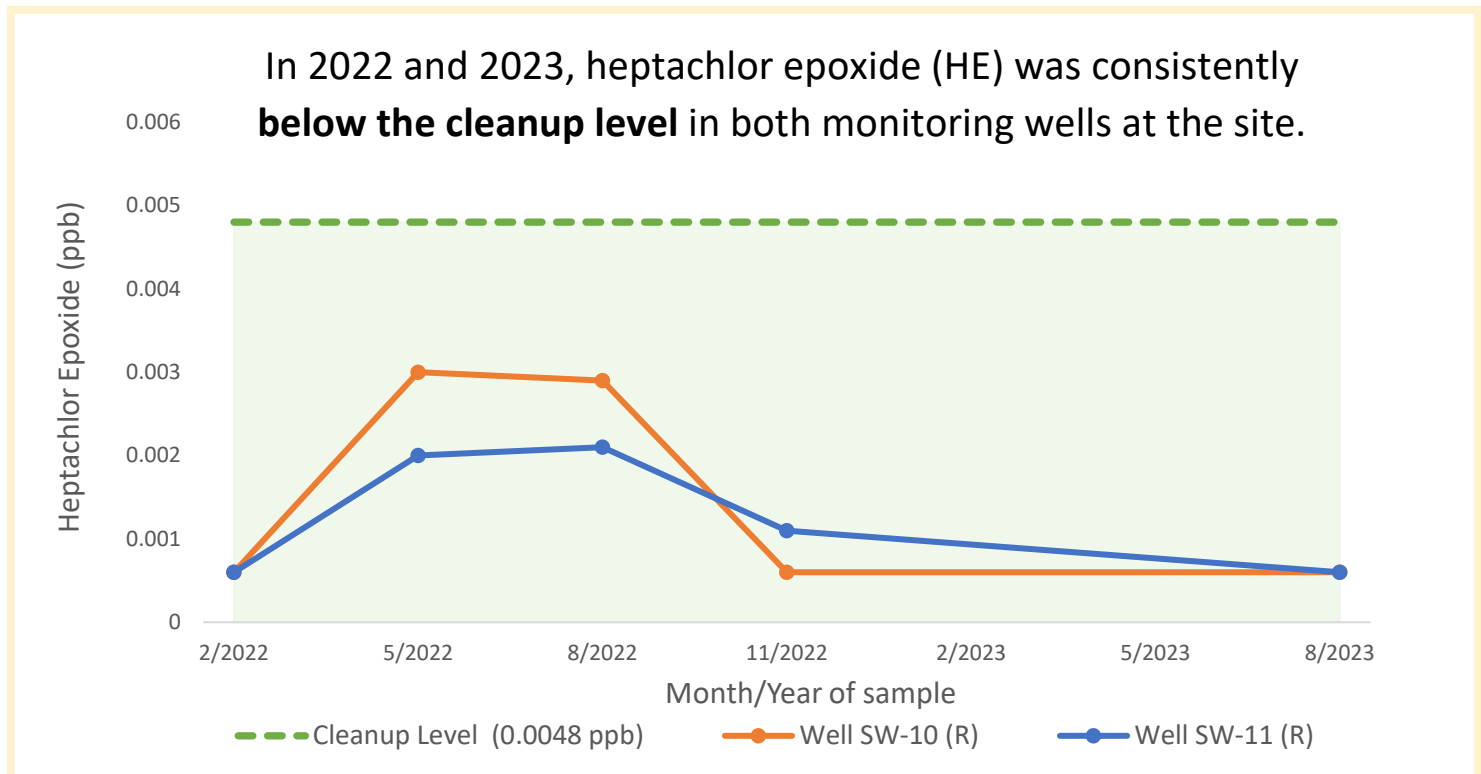


Figure 3. Since February 2022, sampling at the site shows heptachlor epoxide below the cleanup level of 0.0048 parts per billion (ppb). Recent samples are much lower than before the 2018 cleanup. In a sample from 2017, the level of heptachlor epoxide was 0.47 ppb in one well and 2.34 ppb in the other. The highest heptachlor epoxide sample from 2022 and 2023 was 0.0029 ppb. **This shows that the 2018 cleanup worked.**

Environmental Covenant and Periodic Reviews

An Environmental Covenant sets rules to prevent people and wildlife from being exposed to the contamination that was left behind. For example, the cleanup area can never be used for schools, childcares, homes, growing food, or grazing animals. Also, Ecology must review and approve any activities that could disrupt soil in the excavated area, to make sure that critters (like worms) in the upper layers of soil are protected. The Environmental Covenant is filed with Thurston County.

Ecology will conduct a periodic review for this site about every five years to make sure the rules in the Environmental Covenant are being followed. To get email updates about this site, please contact carolyn.subramaniam@ecy.wa.gov. Or, subscribe to auto-updates from our system on the site webpage.



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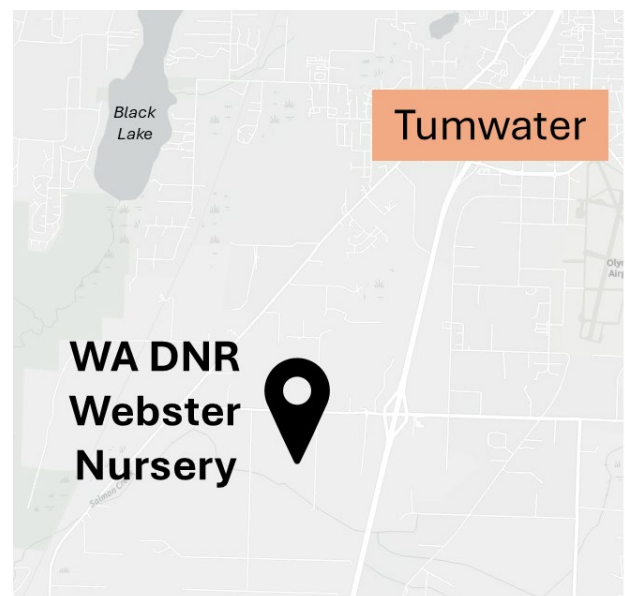
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Webster Nursery is a tree nursery in Tumwater. A leaking underground storage tank released hazardous pesticides into soil and groundwater. Cleanup work happened in 1996 and 2018. Recent groundwater samples meet the cleanup goals. Now, Ecology is ready to remove the site from the Contaminated Sites List.



ADA accessibility: To request an ADA accommodation, contact Ecology by phone at 564-250-0563 or email at carolyn.subramaniam@ecy.wa.gov. For Relay Service or TTY call 711 or 877-833-6341. For more information, please visit ecology.wa.gov/ADA.