

Stewart House Cleanup Site



Stewart House Cleanup Site (photo courtesy: Google Maps)

Comments accepted

April 7, 12:00 a.m. –
May 6, 11:59 p.m., 2025

Submit comments

Online at:

go.ecology.wa.gov/StewartHouse-Comments

Or by mail to:

Zak Wall, Site Manager
WA Department of Ecology
PO Box 330316
Shoreline, WA 98133-9716
425-758-5231
Zak.Wall@ecy.wa.gov

Document review locations

go.ecology.wa.gov/StewartHouse

Seattle Public Library – Capitol Hill
425 Harvard Ave E
Seattle, WA 98102
206-684-4715

Department of Ecology Northwest Region Office

15700 Dayton Ave N
Shoreline, WA 98133
Please call for an appointment:
206-594-0000

Site info

Facility Site ID: 48336
Site Cleanup ID: 14787

Documents ready for public review and comment

The Department of Ecology (Ecology) is overseeing a cleanup of the Stewart House cleanup site (site) in Seattle's Capitol Hill neighborhood. Downtown Emergency Service Center (DESC), a nonprofit based in Seattle, is doing the cleanup. Ecology is providing funding for this cleanup through our Affordable Housing Cleanup Grant Program. This program ensures sites are cleaned up properly while promoting community engagement and ensuring affordable housing in the process.

We would like your comments on the following documents:

Agreed Order (AO): a legal agreement that directs the involved parties to carry out cleanup at the site under Ecology's supervision.

Public Participation Plan: a document that explains how people can participate in the cleanup process.

Questions? Join us for an open house!

Drop-in online or in-person during this two-hour open house for food and a conversation about this cleanup site. Interpretation available in Spanish and Chinese.

Tuesday, April 15, 2025
(5:00pm – 7:00pm)

In-person:

Seattle Public Library – Capitol Hill
425 Harvard Ave E, Seattle WA 98144

Online: Register and join Zoom:

go.ecology.wa.gov/StewartHouse



**This event is NOT hosted, sponsored, or endorsed by The Seattle Public Library*

Background

[DESC](https://desc.org/)¹ is a non-profit affordable housing developer in Seattle, founded in 1979 to provide shelter, services, and housing for people experiencing chronic homelessness. DESC is entering this AO to redevelop its properties at 1727, 1733, and 1737 Belmont Ave (collectively known as the Stewart House cleanup site) in Seattle's Capitol Hill neighborhood into a single building known as the DESC Belmont. DESC Belmont will be a type of multifamily rental housing known as Permanent Supportive Housing, which includes on-site support services for tenants and staff. More information about the project can be found on DESC's [Belmont Supportive Housing](https://www.desc.org/belmont/)² webpage.

The need for an AO at this site arises from the historical uses at the properties. All three properties were developed in the early 1900s as two or three-story apartment buildings. The properties appear to have been used as apartments since their construction. These properties have historically been heated by oil-burning furnaces served by underground storage tanks (UST). Previous environmental reports show that petroleum hydrocarbons were released from one or more of the tanks at the site.



Figure 1: Site map with location

Contamination

Soil contaminated with petroleum hydrocarbons has been discovered by prior investigation in 2017. These contaminants were found at levels above levels considered protective of health by the state's cleanup law, the Model Toxics Control Act ([MTCA](https://www.ecology.wa.gov/mtca))³. The extent of the contamination will be determined in the remedial investigation. MTCA requires these contaminants to be cleaned up.

What happens next?

Ecology will consider all comments received and may amend the documents based on your comments. After that, the AO and Public Participation Plan will be finalized, and the formal cleanup will begin. A site study, called a Remedial Investigation (RI) will occur first. The results of the RI will inform the cleanup options in the Feasibility Study (FS). Results from the Feasibility Study will lead to a Cleanup Action Plan (CAP). Drafts of the RI, FS, and CAP will be available for public review and comment.

¹ <https://desc.org/>

² <https://www.desc.org/belmont/>

³ <https://ecology.wa.gov/mtca>

Why this site matters

This site cleanup is made possible in part by funding from Ecology's [Affordable Housing Cleanup Grants](#)⁴. Washington is in dire need of affordable housing across the state. Contamination, or even the suspicion of contamination, drives up the cost of housing development. The high cost leaves little incentive for developers to build affordable housing.

In addition to the usual risks of redevelopment, cleaning up contaminated sites can be a complex process with considerable risk. The costs and time associated with cleaning up a site are often poorly understood; as a result, many sites are left vacant or underused for years, even decades. Supporting cleanups for affordable housing helps ensure the cleanup gets done while protecting the community's health and the environment.

Ecology developed the Affordable Housing Cleanup Grant Program (AHCGP) to help advance environmental cleanups for affordable housing developments. These grants can cover remedial action costs, including the planning, investigative, and technical work needed to clean up contaminated sites. The purpose of the AHCGP is to speed up the cleanup and redevelopment of contaminated sites into affordable housing and lessen the impact of cleanup costs.

Ecology's cleanup process

MTCA is Washington's environmental cleanup law. It provides requirements for contaminated site cleanup and sets standards that protect human health and the environment. Ecology enacts MTCA and oversees cleanups. The [MTCA cleanup process](#)⁵ is completed in steps (see graphic below) over a variable timeline.



Figure 2: Washington's cleanup process

Información en español Si desea recibir una hoja informativa totalmente traducida al español, incluida información sobre una jornada de puertas abiertas con intérpretes el 15 de abril a las 5:00 p. m., visite go.ecology.wa.gov/StewartHouse, Seattle Public Library Capitol Hill Branch (425 Harvard Ave E Seattle, WA 98102), o llame al 425-533-5537 y espere a que un intérprete se una a la llamada.

有關清理工作的中文信息 如果您希望收到中文完整翻译的概况介绍，包括参加4月15日下午 5:00 有口译员参加的开放日信息，请登录 go.ecology.wa.gov/StewartHouse，西雅图公共图书馆 (Seattle Public Library) Beacon Hill 分馆 (425 Harvard Ave E Seattle, WA 98102)，或致电 425-533-5537，等待口译员加入通话

⁴ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Spills-Cleanup/Contamination-cleanup/Brownfields/Affordable-housing>

⁵ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Spills-Cleanup/Contamination-cleanup/Cleanup-process>

Toxics Cleanup Program
PO Box 330316
Shoreline, WA 98133

Stewart House Cleanup Site

Documents ready for public review and comment

Información en español incluida (página 3)
有關的信息, 已被翻譯成中文 (見第 3 頁)

Public Comment Period

April 7, 12:00 a.m. – May 6, 11:59 p.m., 2025
go.ecology.wa.gov/StewartHouse-Comments

Open house – see page 1 for information

Tuesday, April 15, 2025, starting at 5:00 p.m.
(hosted simultaneously in-person and online)

Food and refreshments provided!

go.ecology.wa.gov/StewartHouse

ADA accessibility

To request an ADA accommodation, contact Ecology by phone at 425-533-5537 or visit ecology.wa.gov/Accessibility. For Relay Service or TTY call 711 or 877-833-6341.

