



Public Participation Plan:

Exterior Wood, Inc.

**2685 Index Street
Washougal, Washington 98671**

Hazardous Waste & Toxics Reduction Program
Washington State Department of Ecology
Southwest Region Office
Olympia, Washington

Publication 26-04-028 | August 2026

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- <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/SummaryPages/2604028.html>

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- Cleanup site ID: 11752
- Facility site ID: 33568379

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¹ <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/cleanupsearch/site/11752>

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DEPARTMENT OF
ECOLOGY
State of Washington

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Public Involvement in Contamination Cleanup

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) developed this Public Participation Plan in collaboration with the operator of the site, Exterior Wood, who is responsible for the cleanup. The goal of this plan is to ensure meaningful community involvement throughout the cleanup of the Exterior Wood facility (the site).

This plan outlines how Ecology will keep the public informed about contamination investigations and cleanup options at each stage of the process. Please review [Appendix A](#) for more information about the cleanup process. The plan also details when and how the community can participate in the cleanup process. We encourage the public to engage with the decision-making opportunities and provide input.

Site contacts

To be included in the site record, comments about the cleanup process must be submitted during comment periods. Questions and informal comments or information about the site's history are welcome anytime.

Ecology

Washington State Department of Ecology
Southwest Region Office
P.O. Box 47775
Olympia, WA 98504-7775

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Exterior Wood, Inc.

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Washougal, Washington 98671

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Exterior Wood

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If you are unable to reach these contacts, please visit Ecology's [Exterior Wood cleanup site webpage](#)² for up-to-date contact information.

² <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/cleanupsearch/site/11752>

Public Participation Activities

Members of the public may ask questions, submit informal comments, or share site information at any time. Interested parties do not need to wait for a formal public comment period to contact Ecology.

However, to be included in the formal site record, comments about the site investigation, cleanup alternatives, or cleanups must be submitted during formal comment periods. In addition, the public is invited to review site documents before they become final. This is the most direct and influential way to learn more about the site and be involved in the cleanup's decision-making.

How we share information with the community

During specific stages of the cleanup, Ecology will mail notices about public comment periods to addresses surrounding the site. The mailing list area will vary depending on the type of contamination and where it's located. At a minimum, the list will include addresses within a quarter-mile radius of the site, as well as other interested organizations and individuals. These notices will provide:

- General information about the site.
- Contact information for submitting comments.
- Times and locations of public meetings or hearings.
- How to request a public meeting if one is not yet scheduled.

If a public meeting has not already been scheduled, community members may request one at any time during an open public comment period. You can request a meeting by contacting the Ecology Site Manager or Communications/Community Outreach staff using the phone number or email listed in the notice and in this plan. When making a request, please include your name, contact information, and a brief explanation of why you believe a meeting would benefit the community. If ten or more people request a meeting, Ecology will schedule one and may extend the public comment period to ensure the meeting occurs during the open comment timeframe.

Comment period notices will be available online and at document repositories (for example at the library closest to the site). Notices may also be posted in various locations throughout the community (for example, local businesses, schools, or post offices).

Ecology may also develop documents outside of comment periods to keep the community updated on the site's status. These informational documents will be available online, and print copies may be mailed to the nearby community if we feel the message warrants the associated cost and resources.

Postal mailing list

Ecology maintains a mailing list that includes addresses near the site and relevant local, state, Tribal, and federal government contacts.

People on the mailing list receive public comment notices when draft documents are available.

We will add additional individuals, organizations, and other interested parties to the mailing list as requested. If you would like to be added to the mailing list for this site, please contact Emilie Kadhim at 564-250-2586 or emilie.kadhim@ecy.wa.gov.

Contaminated Site Register

Public comment periods, events, and other cleanup notices are published in Ecology's [Contaminated Site Register](#).³ To receive the *Contaminated Site Register* by email, please [subscribe online](#),⁴ or contact Sarah Kellington at sarah.kellington@ecy.wa.gov or 360-280-3167.

Newspaper display ads or legal notices

We announce public comment periods and events for this site in ads or notices published in the [The Columbian](#).⁵ We will also publish notice on our [Public Input & Events Listing](#).⁶

Ecology's website and social media platforms

We maintain a webpage for [the site's cleanup page](#).⁷ The website provides site information, and you may download cleanup documents.

We may also share information about cleanup sites through [news releases, our blog, and social media](#).⁸

Email lists

Ecology has an email list to update interested people about transfer, storage, and disposal facilities in the state, including this site. If you would like to be added to the email list for this site, please contact Emilie Kadhim at 564-250-2586 or emilie.kadhim@ecy.wa.gov.

Automatic site updates

You can subscribe to this site from our [Exterior Wood webpage](#).⁹ You'll receive a weekly email if we change the site's status, add documents to the site's webpage, or open a comment period.

³ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Guidance-technical-assistance/Site-Register-lists-and-data>

⁴ <https://ecology.wa.gov/site-register>

⁵ <https://www.columbian.com/>

⁶ <https://ecology.wa.gov/Events/Search/Listing>

⁷ <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/cleanupsearch/site/11752>

⁸ <https://ecology.wa.gov/about-us/who-we-are/news>

⁹ <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/cleanupsearch/site/11752>

Places to see print documents

During public comment periods, you can find print documents at the following locations:

Ecology's Southwest Region Office

300 Desmond Drive SE
Lacey, Washington 98503
360-407-6300

Washougal Community Library

1661 "C" Street
Washougal, WA 98671
360-906-4860

You can also review documents on our website: [Exterior Wood, Inc.](#)¹⁰

How you can share information with us

We hold public comment periods and sometimes public events to learn your thoughts, opinions, and concerns about cleanup at a site. We may also identify public concerns and cleanup goals by meeting with and soliciting information from interested community members and organizations. To collaborate with us about this site, please contact Emilie Kadhim at 564-250-2586 or emilie.kadhim@ecy.wa.gov.

Public comment periods

At a minimum, the Model Toxics Control Act ([MTCA](#)) requires 30-day comment periods to allow interested members of the public to comment on draft documents, legal agreements, and proposed cleanup actions. If there is significant interest, Ecology may extend the public comment period.

When Ecology oversees State Environmental Policy Act ([SEPA](#)) determinations, we hold comment periods for at least two weeks and may extend to 30 days or more when other cleanup documents are concurrently available for review.

Following a comment period, we publish all the input we received and respond to significant comments and questions. If the comments result in significant changes to the cleanup documents, then the documents will be revised and re-issued for public review. If the comments do not result in significant changes, the documents will become final.

Public events

We hold public meetings, workshops, open houses, and hearings based on community interest. At meetings, workshops, and open houses, attendees can ask questions, learn more about the site, and submit written comments when a comment period is open. At a public hearing, verbal comments are transcribed for the record, and Ecology responds to them after the comment period in our response to comments.

¹⁰ <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/cleanupsearch/site/11752>

If we have not scheduled an event, we will hold one if 10 people request it. This may cause us to extend a public comment period, so the event occurs during it.

Events are held at locations close to the site that meet Americans with Disabilities Act standards. Public events are always announced in advance using a variety of methods.

Public Participation Grants

Grants may be available to neighborhood committees, non-profits, and other groups interested in the site. For contaminated sites, these funds can be used to:

- Hire an expert to help interpret technical information.
- Conduct activities that enhance the public's understanding of, and participation in, the cleanup process.

For more information about public participation grants, please contact:

- Laura Busby at 360--280--5088 or laura.busby@ecy.wa.gov.
- Maria Marlin at 360-407-6083 or maria.marlin@ecy.wa.gov.

You may also visit the [Public Participation Grant webpage](#).¹¹

Site Information

Historical use

The Exterior Wood facility is located in the Camas–Washougal Industrial Park, a long-established manufacturing and distribution district situated along the Columbia River in Clark County, Washington. The park sits between the cities of Camas and Washougal, two historically industrial communities shaped by timber processing, paper manufacturing, and river-based commerce.

Together, Camas and Washougal form a linked economic region with over 45,000 residents, where manufacturing, distribution, and industrial services are major employment sectors. The Camas–Washougal Industrial Park supports dozens of commercial and industrial businesses and remains a regional hub for lumber processing, fabrication, shipping, and heavy equipment operations.

The Exterior Wood facility, located on Index Street within the park, has operated as a commercial wood-treatment plant since 1977. Wood-treating facilities in this area benefited from proximity to major freight transportation networks—including truck routes, nearby rail access, and deep-water shipping at regional ports—making the location well-suited for large-scale lumber processing and distribution.

¹¹ <https://ecology.wa.gov/PPG>

Industrial Operations

Exterior Wood treats lumber to increase its lifespan by making it resistant to rot, insects, and weathering. This wood-preserving process injects chemical preservatives deep into the wood under pressure. Once treated, the lumber is transferred to a **drip pad** where excess preservative drains off and the product dries.

How the site became contaminated

Over decades of operation, accidental leaks and drips of wood-preserving chemicals at the drip pad resulted in contamination beneath the pad area. Historical preservatives used at the facility include:

- **Chromated copper arsenate (CCA)**
- **Copper azole**
- **Borate**
- **Boric acid**

Environmental sampling over multiple decades has documented contamination in soil and groundwater from these preservatives. Chemicals associated with the site's historical treatment processes include **arsenic**, **chromium**, and **copper**—all components of CCA or related formulations.

Cleanup plans

Wood treatment operations began at the site in 1977. In 1993, Exterior Wood, Inc., became both the operator and owner and continued wood-treating activities. In 1995, Exterior Wood notified Ecology and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency of an accidental chemical release after deficiencies in the drip pad system were discovered. Contaminated soil and asphalt were excavated where accessible, the drip pad was repaired, and additional groundwater monitoring wells were installed. Some contamination, including CCA-impacted soil, remained in hard-to-reach areas.

In 1996, Bishoprick Properties, Inc., became the property owner while Exterior Wood continued to operate the facility. In 2011, Exterior Wood reported to Ecology that contamination—arsenic and other suspected metals—was present in soil and groundwater. Ecology and Exterior Wood entered Agreed Order 7971 in 2012 to address necessary improvements to the drip pad system and bring it into compliance.

A Remedial Alternatives Evaluation was completed in 2018 to assess cleanup options for arsenic and other contaminants. That same year, Exterior Wood was purchased by Taiga Building Products. In 2019, Exterior Wood installed a groundwater extraction system designed to address elevated arsenic concentrations. Extracted groundwater is reused in the facility's arsenic-containing treatment processes. Exterior Wood notified Ecology of the system's operation in 2021.



Figure 1. Formal Cleanup Process Infographic (English). [Read a plain text version](#).¹²



Figure 2. Formal cleanup process infographic (Spanish). [Proceso de limpieza de Washington](#).¹³

Environmental Justice and Title VI

Environmental justice promotes fair treatment of all people under environmental laws and policies, regardless of their race, color, national origin, or income.

In Washington (and across the United States), more people of color and low-income people live and work near industrial facilities, contaminated sites, and in neighborhoods without easy access to fresh food, green spaces, or clean air and water. These conditions negatively and unfairly affect their health and safety.

Environmental justice strategies and compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act are key to addressing these inequities—especially through public involvement. We make every effort to inform and involve all people. To do this, we use demographic and environmental health disparities information to design our messaging to fit the community.

Area community

In 2021 Ecology ran a demographic analysis using EPA's Environmental Justice Screen (EJSCREEN) tool for a one-mile radius around Exterior Wood's cleanup site. The standard report suggests these indicators for environmental justice considerations:

¹² <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/SummaryPages/1909166.html>

¹³ <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/SummaryPages/1909166ES.html>

- Low-income population.
- Linguistically isolated population.
- Population with less than high school education.
- Population under 5 years of age.
- Population over 64 years of age.

Clark County–level census data indicate that approximately 7.9% of residents speak a language other than English at home, with Spanish being the most common. While linguistic isolation is relatively low (about 1%), Ecology will provide language access services consistent with federal guidance and community needs.

Countywide data also show lower income and educational attainment compared to state averages, as well as higher poverty rates contributing to socioeconomic vulnerability. These indicators help identify communities that may require additional outreach support during the cleanup process.

In 2026, Ecology also used the [Washington Tracking Network](#)¹⁴ mapping tool (Washington State Department of Health) to evaluate broader social and environmental factors. On a scale of 1 (low) to 10 (high), the Washougal area scored:

- 7 for Environmental Health Disparities.
- 6 for Socioeconomic Factors.

These scores reflect conditions such as poverty, primary language spoken, educational attainment, and unemployment.

Ecology will reach out to cultural community organizations as part of our outreach and provide information in other languages according to federal guidance.¹⁵ The non-English language most widely spoken in the area is Spanish. When appropriate, Ecology will provide outreach in Spanish. To request information in another language, call please contact Emilie Kadhim at 564-250-2586 or emilie.kadhim@ecy.wa.gov and wait on the line while we connect an interpreter.

We strive to make our public participation efforts as inclusive as possible and welcome your input about how to best reach the nearby community.

Tribal engagement

Ecology has identified the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs, and the Yakama Nation, as potentially affected by contamination and cleanup activities at the Exterior Wood site. These Tribes have cultural, historical, and environmental interests in the lower Columbia River region, and several hold

¹⁴ <https://doh.wa.gov/data-and-statistical-reports/washington-tracking-network-wtn>

¹⁵ <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2004/06/25/04-14464/guidance-to-environmental-protection-agency-financial-assistance-recipients-regarding-title-vi>

treaty-reserved rights related to fishing, hunting, and gathering that may intersect with the area.

We will reach out to these Tribes to offer opportunities for government-to-government engagement in the cleanup process that are separate from the public involvement process. This engagement is described in a site-specific Tribal Engagement Plan, as required by [WAC 173-340-620](#).¹⁶

Ecology also invites Tribal members and other Indigenous peoples to participate in the public involvement process, including comment periods, public meetings, and informational sessions. We are committed to maintaining culturally respectful communication, incorporating Tribal concerns into decision-making, and ensuring that cleanup actions protect both environmental and cultural resources.

Washington's Cleanup Laws

Ecology uses the [Model Toxics Control Act \(MTCA\)](#)¹⁷ and accompanying regulations for cleanup activities, including at facilities that treated, stored, or disposed of hazardous wastes. These hazardous waste site cleanups are called “corrective actions” and are required under the federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for maintaining and enforcing environmental standards across the United States. EPA has authorized Ecology to incorporate the MTCA cleanup process for hazardous waste site cleanups, ensuring that cleanups are being conducted consistently statewide.

MTCA provides guidelines for contaminated site cleanup in Washington State. This law sets standards to ensure that the cleanup protects people and the environment. MTCA requires the creation of this plan.

Model Toxics Control Act

MTCA began in 1988 as a citizen-led effort to clean up contaminated sites in Washington State. Passed in 1989, the law holds property owners or operators responsible for cleaning up contamination on, or coming from, their property.

Ecology carries out MTCA, making sure cleanups happen according to state rules and regulations. These rules are found in [Chapter 173-340 Washington Administrative Code \(WAC\)](#).¹⁸ Ecology investigates reports of contamination, and the property is placed on the

¹⁶ <https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=173-340-620>

¹⁷ <https://www.ecology.wa.gov/mtca>

¹⁸ <https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=173-340>

[Contaminated Sites List](#)¹⁹ if the pollution is determined to pose a serious risk to human health or the environment. This starts the cleanup process at the site.

The cleanup process under MTCA includes several steps (see [Appendix A](#)). Public involvement is a key part of MTCA's [cleanup process](#).²⁰ Nearby residents, businesses, community groups, and other interested parties can review and comment on documents related to steps that make crucial decisions or plans about the cleanup.

State Environmental Policy Act

MTCA cleanups also require evaluation under the [State Environmental Policy Act \(SEPA\)](#).²¹ Under SEPA, the potential for significant adverse environmental impacts from a project or action must be evaluated by state and local agencies when making decisions. This evaluation is subject to public review and comment in parallel with cleanup documents.

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act

Congress passed the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) in 1976 to ensure hazardous waste is managed and disposed of safely. Ecology has been authorized by EPA to implement RCRA in Washington State using the state's Dangerous Waste Regulations.

RCRA's goals are to:

- Protect human health and the environment.
- Reduce waste generation.
- Conserve energy and natural resources.
- Ensure that wastes are managed in an environmentally sound manner.

Hazardous waste treatment, storage, and disposal facilities must have a permit to design, operate, maintain, and close their site. RCRA also requires these facilities to clean up contamination from past and present practices. These hazardous waste cleanup activities are known as "corrective action" under RCRA.

Federal RCRA and state Dangerous Waste Regulations require opportunities for public participation during the stages of facility permitting and cleanup.

¹⁹ <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/cleanupsearch/reports/cleanup/contaminated>

²⁰ <http://www.ecology.wa.gov/MTCA-process>

²¹ <https://app.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=197-11>

Plan Amendments

Ecology developed this plan following MTCA regulations (WAC 173-340-600). We review it as the cleanup progresses and amend it as necessary. You may suggest amendments to Emilie Kadhim at 564-250-2586 or emilie.kadhim@ecy.wa.gov.

We intend for this plan to provide the public with information on opportunities for public involvement and comment. The outreach activities discussed reflect Ecology's current plans to keep the public informed. It also provides ways for those interested in the site to communicate their concerns and questions to us.

If you feel the planned outreach activities and mechanisms found in this plan are insufficient or would like to modify them in some way, please contact us. We will work to find solutions. We can implement new activities or outreach tools right away, with or without amending this plan.

Appendix A. Steps in the MTCA cleanup process

The cleanup process is defined in the [Model Toxics Control Act](#),²² Washington's cleanup law.

For a brief description, see the graphic on the next page.

Translations are available in several languages, including:

- Chinese: [华盛顿州的清理流程 \(信息图\)](#)²³
- Korean: [와싱턴주의 환경정화 절차](#)²⁴
- Russian: [Процесс устранения загрязнения в штате Washington \(инфографике\)](#)²⁵
- Spanish: [Proceso de limpieza de Washington](#)²⁶
- Tagalog: [Proseso ng Paglilinis sa Washington \(graphic\)](#)²⁷
- Ukrainian: [Процес проведення очисних робіт у штаті Washington \(інфографіку\)](#)²⁸
- Vietnamese: [Quy trình Tẩy nhiễm của Washington](#)

²² <https://www.ecology.wa.gov/mtca>

²³ <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/SummaryPages/1909166ZH.html>

²⁴ <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/SummaryPages/1909166KO.html>

²⁵ <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/SummaryPages/1909166RU.html>

²⁶ <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/SummaryPages/1909166ES.html>

²⁷ <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/SummaryPages/1909166TL.html>

²⁸ <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/SummaryPages/1909166UK.html>

Washington's Cleanup Process

Public participation plans and comment periods are only required for cleanups under a legal agreement with Ecology. Otherwise, all cleanups follow the same steps. The steps are defined by Washington's cleanup law, the Model Toxics Control Act.



Initial investigation

Find out if there's contamination needing cleanup.



Assess the site

Evaluate potential threat to humans and the environment.



Study the site (remedial investigation)

- Find out what and where the contamination is.
- Determine how contamination might impact living things.



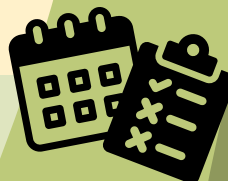
Consider options (feasibility study)

- Compare ways to keep the contamination from harming people or the environment.
- Weigh benefits versus costs of each cleanup option.



Plan the cleanup (cleanup action plan)

- Describe Ecology's selected cleanup option.
- Set cleanup standards that will protect living things.
- Schedule next steps.
- Set requirements for monitoring and maintenance.



Design the cleanup

Make detailed construction plans for the cleanup action.



Clean up the site!

Complete the cleanup action. For example:

- Constructing a multi-layered capping system.
- Installing a treatment system.
- Removing contamination to a special landfill.



Monitor, maintain, and review

- Operate treatment systems and monitor progress.
- Prevent activities that could disturb the cleanup.
- Review regularly to ensure cleanup still protects living things.



Remove from Contaminated Sites List

Move to No Further Action list if site meets all standards and requirements.



Public input opportunity

Interim actions

may clean up some contamination before the final cleanup.



Legal orders or agreements

define required tasks and schedules.

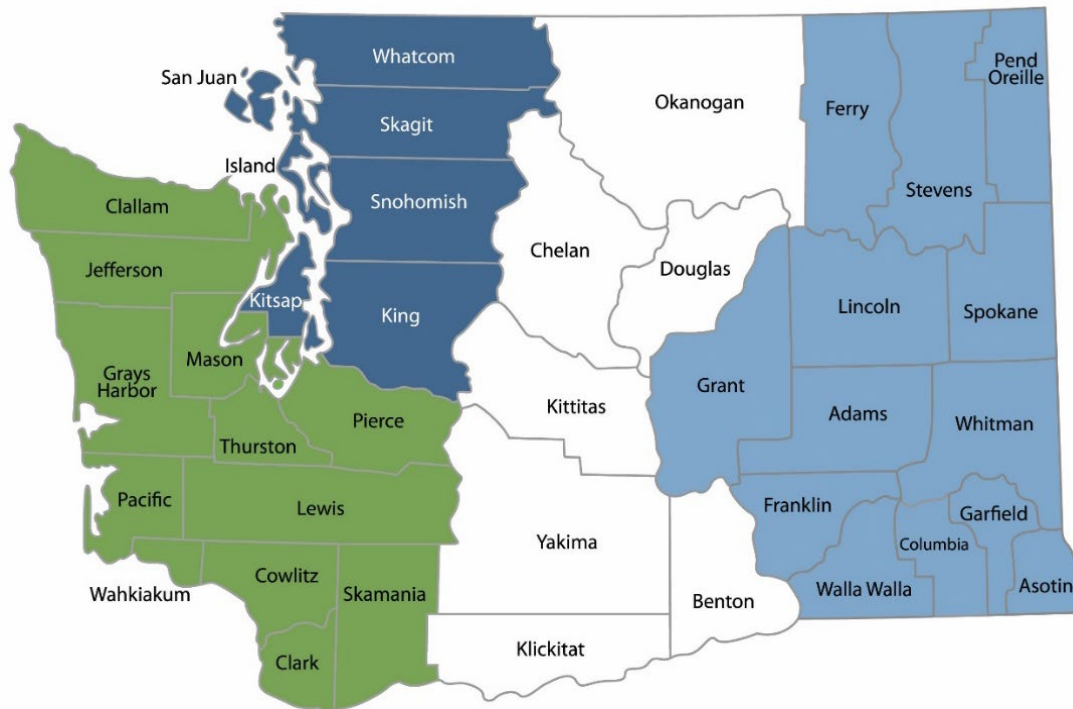


Public participation plans explain how Ecology will ask for input from the local community.



Department of Ecology's Region Offices

Map of Counties Served



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