



EPA Requests Information from Businesses Near the Portland Harbor Superfund Site

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Environmental Fact Sheet

In January 2008, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sent letters to approximately 280 current and former property owners, tenants, or facility operators in the general vicinity of the Portland Harbor Superfund Site. These letters are requesting information that will help EPA learn more about the materials handled at these sites, past practices and known or suspected releases of contamination to the Willamette River.

Why is EPA sending out these information request letters?

These letters are part of EPA's information gathering process and search for potentially responsible parties under the authority provided by Section 104(e) of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), the Superfund law. Issuing information request letters is a basic component of nearly all PRP searches.

How was it decided who would receive an information request?

EPA has previously identified approximately 80 entities as potentially responsible parties. All PRPs have gotten information requests. Past owners, tenants, or operators on property owned by a PRP, if known, were sent information requests. Owners of property adjacent to the river received an information request, as well as owners or operators of properties where either: (1) a release of contamination was reported to the state; (2) a cleanup was or is being undertaken at a property; or (3) other information indicates there may have been a release from the property,

Why did businesses away from the River receive information request letters?

Contamination from commercial activities at these businesses may have been transported to the river through surface runoff, stormwater, groundwater, and air.

Can letter recipients choose not to respond to EPA?

Compliance with the request letter is mandatory, and if EPA does not receive a complete response, the recipient may be subject to possible enforcement action from EPA.

How will EPA use the information to plan and carry out cleanup?

The requested information will help EPA better understand the meaning of sampling data gathered during the remedial investigation for the Portland Harbor Superfund Site. The information will also help EPA determine the need for response and deciding what response is appropriate for the Portland Harbor Superfund Site.

Will EPA use this information to identify polluters?

The information request letters do not designate an entity as a potentially responsible party. However, the requested information may help EPA identify additional Potentially Responsible Parties (PRP's) for the Portland Harbor Superfund Site prior to issuance of the Record of Decision (ROD).

For further information:

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