

SUPERFUND

Fact Sheet

COMMENCEMENT BAY NEARSHORE/TIDEFLATS *Tacoma, Washington*



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

July 2001

Occidental Chemical Removal Action Hylebos Waterway Tacoma, Washington

Make a Difference in EPA's Cleanup Decisions! Send Us Your Comments on the Proposed Cleanup Remedy for the Embankment Area Before August 30, 2001.

The U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) would like your comments on a proposal to cap the entire Embankment Area of the former Occidental Chemical facility and adjacent property located at the mouth of the Hylebos Waterway.

EPA's Proposed Alternative and Schedule

Embankment Capping is EPA's proposed removal action alternative. Capping the entire embankment with clean material would prevent people and marine life from coming in contact with the Embankment, and would prevent migration of contaminants from the area. It would also provide an area where contaminated water seeping from the Embankment could dilute to acceptable Marine Water Quality Standards, before reaching the Hylebos Waterway.

A gravel leveling layer would be placed over the existing Embankment followed by a geotextile fabric to separate the gravel layer from the overlying sand. The sand layer would be covered with an armor layer of gravel or larger rocks. The armor layer would be covered with sand and gravel, called a fish mix, to improve habitat feeding and rearing for juvenile salmon and other marine life. The actual thickness of the cap and exact materials would be determined during final design after monitoring groundwater flow.

If this alternative is selected, completion of a temporary cap is scheduled for February 2002.

Completion of the final cap is currently scheduled for February 2003. The approximate cost would be \$3,170,000.

Send your written comments before August 30th to:

**Ken Marcy, EPA Project Manager
1200 Sixth Avenue, ECL-111
Seattle, WA 98101**

EPA considered three potential alternatives for the Embankment Area: no further action; partial embankment removal and capping; and embankment capping. These alternatives were evaluated for cost, effectiveness and implementability.

Other Alternatives Considered

Partial Embankment Removal and Capping consists of excavating about 22,000 cubic yards of contaminated material and replacing it with clean material. This alternative would provide approximately the same protection of human health and the environment as capping the Embankment Area. The approximate cost would be \$16,560,000, which is much higher than the proposed alternative. The cost would be even

higher if treatment of the excavated material was required before disposal.

No Further Action provides a comparison with the other alternatives. This alternative does nothing to prevent people and marine life from coming in direct contact with contaminants greatly exceeding the Sediment Quality Objectives. It also does nothing to prevent ongoing leaching and seeping of contaminants (primarily metals) into the Hylebos Waterway. The approximate cost would be \$220,000.

Background

The Commencement Bay Nearshore/Tideflats (CB/NT) Superfund Site is located in Tacoma, Washington at the southern edge of Puget Sound. EPA placed the site on the National Priorities List for cleanup under Superfund on September 8, 1983. Since the late 1800s, shipbuilding, oil refining, chemical manufacturing and storage, and other industrial activities have caused hazardous waste contamination of the land and water in the Commencement Bay area. Many of these contaminants have affected marine life. The cleanup goal for the site is to have a healthy marine environment and protect people from eating contaminated seafood from the Bay. This goal was established in EPA's 1989 cleanup plan.

The CB/NT site includes the Hylebos, Sitcum, St. Paul, Middle, Wheeler-Osgood, and Thea Foss Waterways, the Puyallup River upstream to the Interstate-5 bridge, and adjacent land areas.

Prior to 1996, a bulk chemistry study of Embankment Area materials was completed. The study indicated widespread contamination of PCB's, pesticides, and metals. After 1996, EPA focused on the contamination coming off of the bank in seeps and shallow groundwater from the fill beneath the area surface. Groundwater is impacted as it passes through the Embankment Area material, primarily from the metal.

The Embankment Area is being separated from the rest of the Hylebos cleanup action as a removal due to the type of contaminants and the chemical concentrations.

A separate (EE/CA) was issued for public comment in July of last year concerning the cleanup of Area 5106. An Action Memorandum for cleanup of Area 5106 was signed on July 7 of this year and is in the information repository.

Future Updates and Community Involvement

EPA will continue to send fact sheets about the removal actions on the former Occidental Chemical facility as designs proceed. Once site preparation begins and the time frame for the trial cap construction is known, EPA will put out another fact sheet. Interested parties may contact EPA at any time for more information.

For More Information:

All of the cleanup alternatives are explained in more detail in a document called an Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis (EE/CA). The EE/CA includes a summary and analysis of all the cleanup options considered for the Embankment Area. Copies of the EE/CA are available for review at the information repositories.

Tacoma Main Public Library
1102 Tacoma Avenue South
Northwest Room
Tacoma, WA

Citizens for a Health Bay
917 Pacific Avenue, Suite 406
Tacoma, WA
(253) 383-2429

Please call for an appointment if information is needed after business hours.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Sixth Avenue
Records Center - 7th Floor
Seattle, WA

If you have questions or would like more information about the Embankment Area Removal Action, **please contact:**

Ken Marcy, EPA Project Manager, at (206) 553-2782; email - marcy.ken@epa.gov

Jeanne O'Dell, EPA Community Involvement Coordinator, at (206) 553-6919; email - odell.jeanne@epa.gov

or call EPA's toll free number
1-800-424-4372

To ensure effective communication with everyone, additional services can be made available to persons with disabilities by contacting one of the EPA numbers listed above.



United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

Region 10 (ECO-081)
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle WA 98101

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