



Health Consultation for Wyckoff/Eagle Harbor Superfund Site

The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) is a federal public health agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It was created by the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980, (also known as the Superfund legislation). ATSDR's mission is to serve the public by using the best science, taking responsive health actions, and providing trusted health information to prevent harmful exposures and disease related to toxic substances.

Who should read this fact sheet?

People who want to know if current and future activities at the Wyckoff/Eagle Harbor site present possible public health concerns from coming into contact with contamination remaining at the site. The full report can be obtained on the web at: <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/HAC/pha/Wyckoff-EagleHarborSuperfundSite/Wyckoff-EagleHarborSuperfundSite7-22-09.pdf> or by calling 206-553-1049.

The purpose of the health consultation

This report was not intended to specify which final clean up options should be carried out by regulatory agencies at the site. A draft version of this report was provided for review to key persons or groups who have a stake in the outcome, including local, state, and federal agencies and the Suquamish Tribe. This report will become a part of the official administrative record and thus available for review and comment during Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) upcoming amendment to the Record of Decision for the site.

Background

The Wyckoff/Eagle Harbor site was a wood treatment facility. It was added to the National Priority List (NPL) as a Superfund site in July 1987. The reason for its listing was that there was contamination as a result of past wood treatment operations.

Use of the Beaches and "The Point"

Is it safe for my children to use the beach?

The West Beach and the Hillside areas are safe for normal leisure activities such as hiking, running, digging, sunbathing, playing ball, etc.

- Care should be taken to make sure that children do not dig into the layer of rocks/cobbles above the plastic sheeting that was recently placed below the beach surface by EPA. This cover separates clean sand from the contaminated soil/sediments below.

Can I safely visit the East Beach/ North Shoal?

- Adults can safely walk or run on the East Beach during low tide, taking care to avoid obvious areas of contamination.
- If children were to use the East Beach/North Shoal a few times each year, it is unlikely that harm would occur from the chemical contamination present, but it would be wise to keep your child from this area.
- It is not advised that dogs or children be allowed to play or dig on East Beach.
- Dogs can bring contaminated soil into the home.
- While most portions of the North Shoal appear to be free from harmful levels of contamination, it would be best to avoid playing in the sediments of the areas between the high and low tide levels.
- However, if you do choose to play in sediments, wash your hands to protect against possible harm.

Is it safe to swim in the water?

ATSDR found that swimming in Eagle Harbor is safe from harmful substances.

Am I at risk from contamination from "The Point?"

"The Point" is a former processing area. Current conditions do not present a risk of coming into contact with contaminants on the former process area known as "The Point". As long as clean up of "The Point" removes the harmful substances or includes a secure cover and keeps the piling wall whole, there should be no way of coming into contact with harmful substances in the future.

Eating Fish, Shellfish and Berries

Is it safe for my children to use the beach?

- Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs) are compounds found in oil, coal and tar. PAHs are made by burning fuels.
- The levels of PAHs in the shellfish sampled are very low and eating shellfish will not increase the risk of making people sick.
- However, an assessment of cancer risk cannot be done due to the lack of ability to measure very small amounts of the PAHs considered to be cancer causing.
- Analysis for metals and a check for bacterial contamination should be completed before it is decided that Eagle Harbor shellfish are safe to eat.
- Mercury levels in the finfish sampled by the Washington State Department of Transportation were on the low end of levels typically found in fish. Eating fish with these levels is not considered to be harmful.
- English Sole and other flatfish may contain higher levels of mercury and PCBs. Limited amounts of these fish should be eaten.
- Mercury should be avoided by pregnant women, infants and young children due to its harmful affects.

- Please note that eating fish is a healthy choice and the possible risks should be carefully weighed against the many known benefits of eating fish.
- See the Washington Department of Health (WDOH) website for further advice and a guide to selecting the healthiest safest fish.
<http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/oehas/fish/fishchart.htm>

Is it safe to harvest and eat berries from the site?

- Berries on the site should be safe to eat. Contaminants in the areas where berries grow are not expected to be taken up by plants.
 - However, it is always good practice to wash berries taken from areas of known contamination before eating them.
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Trails and Creosote

Is it safe to use the trail system on the hillside?

Other than the risk of physical harm typical with any “nature” trail, the trails are safe to use. There is no evidence to show that harmful substances exist in the areas of the trails at levels of concern.

Is the creosote on pilings and poles harmful?

- A small amount of contact with these pilings and poles is not likely to result in harmful health effects.
 - If you come into contact with these pilings and poles, make sure you wash your hands.
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Conclusions and Recommendations

General

- Most areas of the site except “The Point” and the East Beach are safe to use. Continued expansion of Pritchard Park can proceed without placing residents at higher risk of coming into contact with harmful levels of contamination. “The Point” and the East Beach still have substances at harmful levels.
- Hillsides – PAH levels below the surface and surface levels of dioxins will not harm people’s health. The trail system can be developed and used without limits. The creosote soaked pole next to one of the trails appears to serve no useful purpose, and should be removed.
- WSDOT facility - Contact with remaining contaminant levels at the facility will not harm people’s health. Since this is an active facility, public access should continue to be controlled.
- “The Point” - Surface contamination has been removed and access is limited by a chain link fence. The pile wall along with groundwater treatment is preventing movement of contaminants. This site will not cause harm to people’s health under current conditions. Final clean up decisions for this area should make sure that people should not come in contact with existing contamination. Until final clean up is completed, limited access should be continued.

Beaches

- West Beach - Recent clean up actions have ended direct contact with contaminants. Unlimited access and use of this area will not harm the health of residents and visitors. Visitors to the site should be educated about the site history and reminded to avoid digging into the layer of rocks/cobbles above the plastic sheeting which separates clean sand/sediments from contaminated sediments.
- East Beach/North Shoal – Even though limited access may result in low risk, the apparent high levels of contamination could harm the health of children using East Beach on a regular basis. Digging and playing in sediments of the areas between the high and low tide levels of the North Shoal should be avoided due to the possible presence of high levels of PAHs.

Fish and Shellfish

- Shellfish - While PAH levels in shellfish are very low and do not present a public health hazard, the harvest and eating or intake of shellfish is still not recommended due to lack of data on cancer-causing PAHs, metals and microbes. The laboratory methods may not have detected some cancer-causing PAHs. In other words, cancer causing PAHs could still be in shellfish at levels below the laboratory detection limit.
- Current guidance for shellfish intake should be followed. Any future analysis of shellfish should include site related contaminants, metals and microbes.
- The current Suquamish Tribe's geoduck study and later analysis by WDOH will assist greatly in determining the safety of eating geoduck clam from the area.
- Fish – Mercury levels in the species of perch sampled by WSDOT at the site will not harm people's health, even for those who eat a lot of perch.
- English Sole and other flatfish may contain higher levels of mercury and PCBs. Limited amounts of these fish should be eaten.
- Fish are a healthy and good food source and the possible risks should be carefully weighed against the many known benefits of eating fish.
- Washington Department of Health advice on eating fish for Puget Sound and fish in general should be followed.

Groundwater and Surface Water

- Groundwater – There is no harm to people's health from drinking water from wells which may be affected by the site.
- Surface Water – It is safe to enjoy such activities as swimming, boating and diving in Eagle Harbor.

For More Information

For any questions about public health issues associated with the site, please contact CAPT Richard Kauffman at:

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