

SLUPERFUND

Fact Sheet

TACOMA LANDFILL *Tacoma, Washington*



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

June 2002

EPA's "Five-Year Review" of the Tacoma Landfill Will Check Cleanup So Far

When EPA decided to place the Tacoma landfill on the Superfund List, it was causing contamination of area groundwater and generating gases which could be dangerous to the surrounding community. Today, cleanup work has improved the water quality, and toxic gases are under control. But is the cleanup protecting people and the environment the way it should be? That is the question the "Five-Year Review" will answer.

What is a "Five -Year Review" ?

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) conducts regular checkups, called five-year reviews, on certain Superfund sites where cleanup is still in progress, or where waste remains that limits site use. EPA looks at these sites to make sure the cleanup continues to protect people and the environment.

How Will the Review be Conducted?

EPA will use many sources of information in conducting this review. The City of Tacoma, which owns and operates the landfill, provides EPA with monitoring information on a regular basis throughout the year. This information includes monitoring data for groundwater, surface water, and landfill gas, in addition to inspection and maintenance reports. EPA will also study the laws that apply, and inspect the site.

The information will be reviewed to decide whether or not the community and the environment are safe from contaminated material and how the community is affected by site cleanup activities. EPA will also consult with the Washington Department of Ecology and the Tacoma Pierce County Health Department, which also regulate activities at the site.

Open Comment Period

June 3 - 28, 2002

Send your comments to:

Lilibeth Serrano
U.S. EPA
1200 6th Ave. (ECO-081)
Seattle, WA 98101

or e-mail Serrano-Velez.Lilibeth@epa.gov

You Have a Role to Play

EPA would also like to get information from people who know about the site. EPA is holding a comment period from June 3 to June 28. As someone living close to the site, you may know about things that can help the review team decide if the site is still safe. We want to know:

- What do you believe should be included in the review?
- What are your impressions of the cleanup?
- What are your environmental concerns?

What is the Schedule?

At the end of the comment period, EPA will consider the public's suggestions and questions. Once the team finishes the five-year review in the summer, it will write a report. This report will include recommendations to fix any problems found during the review.

The final report is expected to be available late September. In October, a summary will be mailed in a fact sheet to community members on our mailing list.

What Happens After The Review?

After the review, the site manager will monitor the site to be sure any problems identified by the review team are fixed. As long as contaminated materials remain at the site that limit use of the site, EPA will do a review every five years. You can also be sure that EPA is keeping an eye on the site between reviews, because the cleanup requires regular work to operate and maintain it. If you see any problems or things that concern you – don't wait for the five year review – let EPA know right away. You can contact the people listed on the next page.

More About The Site

The Tacoma Landfill site covers 210 acres. About 125 acres have been used for solid waste disposal and are now closed and covered with a protective cover. An additional 30 acres are being used for waste disposal and will remain open through 2004 or later. The remaining 55 acres are used as a collection and distribution center for most of the solid wastes generated in the city.

A groundwater extraction and treatment system and a landfill gas management system were installed in several phases beginning in 1986. As part of the landfill gas management system, a portion of the landfill gas is used to generate electricity.

Monitoring data shows that the groundwater quality outside the boundary of the landfill continues to improve, but still does not meet the established cleanup levels. However, the groundwater extracted by the extraction and treatment system has been meeting the established cleanup levels since 1999 and is currently disposed of in the sanitary sewer without treatment.

The City has recently requested permission from EPA, Ecology, and the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department to discharge the extracted groundwater directly into the storm sewer that eventually empties into Leach Creek. A decision is expected within the next month or two.

Information Repositories

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

Citizens for a Healthy 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
7th Floor Record Center
Seattle, WA
(206) 553-4494

For More Information

Contacts

EPA Project Manager, Tacoma Landfill
Robert Kievit
(360) 753-9014

Community Involvement Coordinator
Lilibeth Serrano
1-800-424-4372 (x-1388)

Washington State Department of Ecology
Christopher Maurer
(360) 407-7223

Tacoma Pierce County Health Department
Dave Bosch
(253) 798-6574

Visit the EPA Region 10 Internet Home Page at:
<http://www.epa.gov/r10earth/>. Information for
the Tacoma Landfill can be found by clicking on
"Index", and selecting "Commencement Bay
Superfund Sites", then "South Tacoma Channel".

*For persons with disabilities: Please contact Lilibeth
Serrano to request reasonable accommodations.
For TTY users: please call the Federal Relay Service
at 1-800-877-8339 and then give the operator
Lilibeth's phone number. Please provide one week
notice for special requests.*