

Active Cleanups

Fruit Valley Cleanup

Contaminated groundwater underneath Vancouver's Fruit Valley neighborhood is getting significantly cleaner thanks to efforts by the Port of Vancouver and the Washington State Department of Ecology.

Although contamination occurred many years before the port owned the properties, cleanup of the Cadet manufacturing and former Swan Manufacturing locations is a top priority for the Port of Vancouver. Cleanup has been ongoing since the groundwater contamination was first discovered in 1998, and fortunately, these efforts have been very successful.

So much so, that the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) has approved the decommissioning and removal of much of the cleanup equipment put in place over the past decade. As of April 2012, the system has pumped approximately 4.4 billion gallons of groundwater, removing 784 pounds of contaminant and significantly reducing the concentrations of chlorinated solvents in the groundwater.

Background

In 1982, the port purchased 0.88 acres of property at the southwest corner of Fourth Plain Blvd. and Mill Plain, where a restaurant, last known as Raggs Tavern, was located. It was later discovered that this property had been the former location of Swan Manufacturing, a baseboard heater manufacturer. In 2006, the port purchased the Cadet property as part of a settlement agreement and assumed cleanup responsibility for that site, as well as the Swan site.

Past practices at the two industrial properties allowed chlorinated solvents to enter the soil, where groundwater carried it under the Fruit Valley neighborhood.

It is important to note that the groundwater beneath the Fruit Valley neighborhood is not a source of drinking water for the community. Fruit Valley neighborhood homes receive drinking water from the city of Vancouver's municipal system.

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Cleanup efforts and results

Various cleanup methods have been used successfully to reduce solvent levels in soil and groundwater at the two sites and in the Fruit Valley neighborhood.

In June 2009, the port, with approval from the Washington State Department of Ecology installed a state-of-the-industry pump and treat groundwater treatment system.

The system, located on port property is designed to remove chlorinated solvents from groundwater using air-stripping technology. It is composed of a large groundwater pumping well and two large towers (air-stripping towers).

Regular monitoring has shown that the groundwater contaminant levels continue to decrease as a result of the pump and treat system.

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Next steps

We're making progress! As a result of innovative and comprehensive treatment efforts, the port and Ecology have successfully reduced the concentration of chlorinated solvents in the groundwater, including that which lies below the Fruit Valley neighborhood.

The port is continuing to monitor groundwater and air quality and is preparing a report on the status of the cleanup efforts. Once Ecology approves the report, the port will begin a feasibility study to evaluate options for final cleanup. Once the feasibility study is done, Ecology will select the final cleanup actions and draft a final cleanup action plan. A public comment period will be part of the process.