

Astoria Marine Construction Company Cleanup



State of Oregon
Department of
Environmental
Quality

Historical ship manufacturing and repair operations at the Astoria Marine Construction Company, or AMCCO, contaminated soil on the property and nearby riverbed sediment in the Lewis and Clark River near the mouth of the Columbia. In coordination with AMCCO, tribal governments, and a community advisory group, DEQ selected a remedy in 2017 to clean up contamination on the site and in the adjacent riverbed. Restoration will also occur to mitigate damaged natural resources. AMCCO will implement the cleanup remedy beginning July 2020 under Oregon Department of Environmental Quality oversight.

Background

AMCCO began to manufacture and repair wooden-hulled fishing and ferryboats, tugboats and yachts in 1924. During World War II, the shipyard expanded operations for construction of military vessels. During the Korean and Vietnam wars, the company built wooden-hulled minesweepers and submarine chasers and refurbished older warships. During the peak production period from 1940 to 1960, the facility employed more than 400 full-time workers. In the 1960s, work for the U.S. Navy decreased and operations transitioned to fishing and tugboat repair. After 1985, business primarily involved repairs of fishing boats.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency conducted environmental investigations on and around the AMCCO site. Investigations found contamination in soil and groundwater on the property and in nearby riverbed sediment. Based on those findings, EPA initiated efforts to place the facility on the National Priorities List to guide cleanup under EPA's Superfund program. In 2012, an agreement deferred the site listing and EPA transferred site management to DEQ.

DEQ signed an agreement with AMCCO to guide the investigation and evaluation of potential cleanup actions to meet federal cleanup standards. DEQ also coordinated and consulted with tribal governments and a community advisory group as site investigation and cleanup planning progressed at the facility.

Investigation findings

An investigation conducted from 2012 to 2015 found operations in the past, such as sand blasting, painting, and waste management, resulted in the release and accumulation of hazardous chemicals on the property and in the nearby riverbed sediment. Contaminants include petroleum, heavy metals and organotins.

The contamination poses potential risks to people who may come into regular contact with the soil, such as AMCCO employees or construction workers. It also poses potential risks to fish and wildlife. Chemicals in the riverbed sediment may also accumulate in fish, which could increase health risks to people eating fish that live in the area.



2012 photograph that shows a fishing vessel pulled into one of AMCCO's shipways.

Cleanup

DEQ issued a Record of Decision in 2017 that identifies a cleanup plan for the site. Under this plan, the most contaminated upland soil and in-water sediment will be excavated and removed from the site. Remaining soil contamination will be capped in place. Most of the remaining in-water sediment contamination will be covered with a layer of clean imported sand. Long-term monitoring will verify the effectiveness of the proposed cleanup action.

For more information

Visit <http://ordeq.org/amcco> or contact Erin McDonnell at 503-229-6900, mcdonnell.erin@deq.state.or.us

Alternative formats

DEQ can provide documents in an alternate format or in a language other than English upon request. Call DEQ at 800-452-4011 or email deqinfo@deq.state.or.us.

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