

# DEQ's Role in Portland Harbor Superfund Cleanup



State of Oregon  
Department of  
Environmental  
Quality

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency listed the Portland Harbor reach of the Willamette River as a Superfund Cleanup Site in December 2000. Portland Harbor extends from Sauvie Island at river mile 1.9 to just downstream of the Broadway Bridge at river mile 11.8.

Sediment in this section of the Willamette is contaminated with various toxic pollutants from decades of industrial activities along the river. Contaminants include metals, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), chlorinated pesticides and dioxins/furans.

EPA is the lead agency for investigating and cleaning up contaminated sediment in the river. DEQ supports and collaborates with EPA to ensure this work corresponds with Oregon's cleanup requirements.

DEQ is the lead agency for overseeing the cleanup of properties located on the banks of the river, called upland sites. These sites may be sources of pollution to the river, so cleaning them up is crucial for preventing ongoing and future contamination.

DEQ is also responsible for identifying, cleaning up or controlling upstream sources of contamination that could enter the Portland Harbor.

DEQ began investigating and cleaning up contamination in the area in the 1980s. DEQ's efforts are now focused on evaluating three main ways contaminants enter Portland Harbor: erodible soil and riverbanks, groundwater and stormwater, and upstream sediment contaminated by upland activities.

The upland cleanup and control of pollution must occur before EPA's in-water sediment cleanup and is vital to its success.

In December 2005, DEQ and EPA developed a Joint Source Control Strategy, which identifies a framework for conducting the upland and pollution control work.

EPA issued the Portland Harbor Record of Decision, or formal cleanup plan, in January 2017. DEQ coordinates closely with EPA to ensure that source control work meets the objectives of the in-water cleanup and, where necessary, is integrated into EPA's in-water cleanup.

Visit DEQ's webpage to view the source control strategy, an interactive map of upland cleanup sites, summary reports, and a video on source control:  
<http://bit.ly/DEQPortlandHarbor>

## Alternative formats

Documents can be provided upon request in an alternate format for individuals with disabilities or in a language other than English for people with limited English skills. To request a document in another format or language, call DEQ in Portland at 503-229-5696, or toll-free in Oregon at 1-800-452-4011, ext. 5696; or email [deqinfo@deq.state.or.us](mailto:deqinfo@deq.state.or.us).

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