

Fact Sheet

Former Armstrong World Industries Site Cleanup

DEQ will begin implementing a major interim removal cleanup action in spring 2026 at the former Armstrong World Industries site adjacent to Scappoose Bay in St. Helens. Construction will take up to three years to complete and will remove soil, sediment and wood waste from the most heavily contaminated portion of the wetlands. This work will significantly reduce risks to human health, fish and wildlife while restoring important ecological habitat.

Lowland cleanup from 2026 – 2028

DEQ's investigation of the lowland and in-water areas included sampling soil, sediment and aquatic life such as bass, carp, crayfish and clams. The highest levels of contamination were found closest to the upland and lowland boundary, where wastewater was discharged directly from the facility until the late 1960s.

DEQ is now implementing an interim removal cleanup action that will remove approximately 52,000 cubic yards of the most heavily contaminated soil, sediment and wood waste across a 10 acre portion of the lowland. Contaminated waste will be processed and trucked to a landfill for disposal.

Habitat restoration will take place in the area after these contaminated materials are removed including native plantings and installation of large woody material habitat structures.

DEQ selected a contractor to perform this work in January 2026, and construction is expected to occur from spring 2026 through 2028. A final long-term cleanup remedy will be selected for the site after this interim removal work is complete.

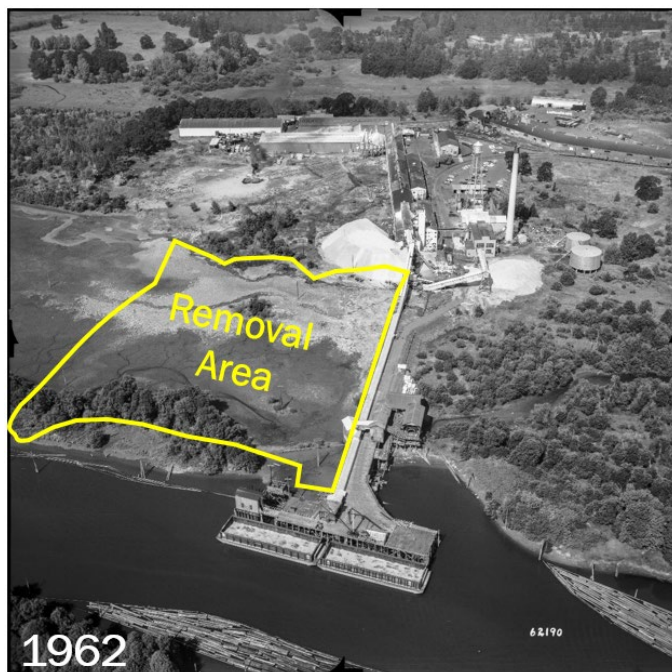
Why the cleanup is needed

Past industrial operations left harmful chemicals in soil and sediment at the site. The main contaminants of concern include:

- Dioxins and furans
- Metals such as arsenic and mercury
- Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, also known as PAHs

Contaminants in the in-water sediment can build up in fish, clams and crayfish. This can pose health risks to people who eat them and can also harm other fish and wildlife that live in the area. There is an [active fish advisory](#) for Scappoose Bay issued by the Oregon Health Authority.

Contaminated soil located along the banks has the potential to move contaminants into the wetlands areas if not addressed.



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Upland cleanup work already completed

DEQ investigated contamination in the upland area by sampling soil, groundwater, catch basin solids, feedstock materials and stormwater. The highest concentrations were found south of the main facility building. After studying cleanup options, DEQ issued a final cleanup decision in 2018, called a Record of Decision, to address contaminated surface soils in the upland portion of the site.

The upland cleanup was completed in summer 2019. This included removing and disposing of highly contaminated soil “hot spots,” installing a gravel and asphalt cap to safely isolate remaining contamination and putting institutional controls in place to help ensure the remedy remains protective over time.

Background

The former Armstrong World Industries site is a 175-acre property located along Scappoose Bay, about one mile south of St. Helens. The site includes approximately 36 acres of upland surrounded by wetlands.

The property was used to manufacture fiberboard products from 1929 until the facility closed in 2018. Over several decades, industrial wastewater was discharged into nearby wetlands and Scappoose Bay, resulting in widespread contamination. While wastewater treatment practices improved over time, contamination from earlier operations remained in soil and sediment.

Former owners and operators include:

- Fir-Tex Insulation Board, 1929 – 1938
- Dant and Russell, 1939 – 1956
- Kaiser Gypsum Company, 1956 – 1978
- Owens Corning Fiberglass Corporation, 1978 – 1987
- Armstrong World Industries, 1987 – 2018

In 2017, DEQ reached a \$77 million settlement with Kaiser Gypsum, Armstrong World Industries and Owens Corning to fund cleanup of the site. As part of that agreement, Armstrong separately funded cleanup of the upland.

The property is now owned by Upland Data Center LLC and remains vacant pending future redevelopment.

Cleanup of this site is part of a [broader cleanup effort](#) in Scappoose Bay and the lower Multnomah Channel. DEQ has overseen environmental investigations in this area for more than 15 years and identified significant contamination at three former industrial properties: the Armstrong World Industries fiberboard plant, former Pope & Talbot creosote facility and Boise Cascade paper mill. Cleanup work is ongoing at each site.

Learn more

Visit the Your DEQ Online database page for this cleanup project to view technical information and project documents at <https://ordeq.org/armstrong-cleanup-ydo>.

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