

Plan for Public Health Assessment Related to Metals Emissions in Portland

March 17, 2016

What is a Public Health Assessment (PHA)?

A PHA is defined by federal law as:

The evaluation of data and information on the release of hazardous substances into the environment in order to assess any [past], current, or future impact on public health, develop health advisories or other recommendations, and identify studies or actions needed to evaluate and mitigate or prevent human health effects (42 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 90, published in 55 Federal Register 5136, February 13, 1990).

The PHA process is conducted to determine whether and to what extent people have been, are being, or may be exposed to contaminants from hazardous waste sites. If there is an exposure, the assessment process is used to evaluate whether the exposure is harmful and should be stopped or reduced. Additionally, the PHA process enables the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to respond to community concerns and prioritize and identify actions that protect public health (ATSDR Public Health Assessment Guidance Manual 2005).

The findings are documented in a PHA report. This report is comprehensive in that:

- We consider past, current, and future exposures, based on current site conditions and future plans.
- We evaluate and document all the ways that people might come into contact with contaminants from the site.
- We describe in detail our process for evaluating the potential contaminants of concern in soil, air, and/or other media. This includes documenting our assumptions and other exposure factors, showing our dose and risk calculations, and more.
- We evaluate biological data, like blood or urine samples, if appropriate.
- We gather and document qualitative information from affected communities about their concerns and the site.
- We make conclusions and provide the basis for these conclusions.
- We make recommendations and identify public health actions to prevent or reduce exposures.

Who will conduct the PHAs?

OHA will conduct the PHAs through its Environmental Health Assessment Program (EHAP).

Has OHA done PHAs before and, if so, where?

Yes. OHA has conducted many PHAs through its Environmental Health Assessment Program (EHAP). EHAP's [website](#) includes links to PHAs that EHAP has completed at other sites in Oregon.

Where will OHA conduct PHAs related to metal emissions in Portland?

OHA is planning to perform PHAs using data from and around the Bullseye Glass Company in Southeast Portland and the Uroboros Glass Studio in North Portland. OHA may conduct additional PHAs related to this issue and is working with other agencies to establish a transparent and fair set of criteria for prioritizing work at additional sites in Portland. Any additional PHAs will be done after Bullseye and Uroboros assessments are done.

When will the PHAs be available to the public?

The Bullseye Glass and Uroboros Glass PHAs will both be released for public comment in fall 2016.