



News Release

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Oakland Bay, Shelton Harbor sediment health focus of comment period, public meeting

OLYMPIA – The public can review and comment on the final results of a Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) study of Oakland Bay and Shelton Harbor sediments.

Ecology staff will talk about the study's findings and answer questions on Dec. 15, 2010, in Shelton. An open house will start at 6:30 p.m. at the Shelton Civic Center, 525 W. Cota. A presentation begins at 7 p.m.

The study and public comments will help Ecology develop strategies to improve the health of Oakland Bay. Ecology will talk with community members to help identify priorities for cleanup and determine how that could link to current and planned habitat restoration projects.

The Ecology study looked for chemicals in sediments and evaluated impacts on marine life. Ecology took samples at multiple locations and depths in Oakland Bay and Shelton Harbor.

Initial results were announced in April 2009, and a full, detailed report is now available.

Samples were tested to measure the concentrations of specific chemicals that Ecology monitors in sediments. None of the samples measured above the state's threshold for those chemicals. ([View the list](#)).

Sampling found dioxins throughout the harbor and bay. Levels in surface sediments ranged from 1 to 175 parts per trillion (ppt). Some higher concentrations were found in deeper sediments. For comparison, the typical background level of dioxins in surface-level sediments from non-urban areas of Puget Sound is about 4 ppt.

The Washington State Department of Health (Health) reviewed Ecology's preliminary study results in 2009. Health determined that people can continue to eat shellfish harvested in Oakland Bay. Shellfish don't accumulate dioxins well because of their low fat content.

Dioxins have been linked to various health impacts. However, the levels in Oakland Bay and Shelton Harbor are not expected to significantly increase everyday exposure to dioxin in sediments.

In addition to attending the Dec. 15 meeting, the public can send comments through Jan. 21, 2011, to:

Oakland Bay sediment study results

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Next steps include Ecology responding to the feedback and questions raised during the comment period. This “response to comments” will be available on Ecology’s website when complete.

Ecology began the study in 2008 as part of the Governor’s Puget Sound Initiative to clean up and protect the health of the Sound.

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Media Contact: Kim Schmanke, 360-407-6239 (desk)

For more information:

Oakland Bay Sediment Investigation

Sediment Investigation Report for Oakland Bay and Shelton Harbor

2008 Sampling and Analysis Plan for Oakland Bay and Shelton Harbor

Washington Dept. of Health analysis of dioxins on human health

Broadcast version

The Department of Ecology released a sediment health study on Oakland Bay and Shelton Harbor. The study is part of Ecology’s work to improve Puget Sound.

Ecology staff will hold a meeting on Dec. 15 to discuss the report. The meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. at the Shelton Civic Center.

Ecology collected and analyzed sediment samples for dioxins and other specific chemicals the state tracks closely. Results show dioxin in every sediment sample, but none of the other chemicals tested above the state’s threshold that would trigger deeper concern.

Measuring for dioxins and chemicals is important to understand potential effects on humans – who are primarily exposed through eating fish and shellfish - and the environment.