

William Kupinse

Kerry Graber, Site Manager
Washington State Department of Ecology
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Dear Kerry Graber:

I write as a Tacoma resident to make a public comment on the Occidental Chemical Cleanup at the Port of Tacoma: It is essential that Occidental undertake the most thorough and intensive cleanup possible, and it must do so as soon as possible.

The clean-up is a matter of public health, environmental health, and environmental justice, as the pollution has greatly impacted the treaty rights of the Puyallup tribe, which grants the tribe fishing rights on the Puyallup river. The salmon runs up the Puyallup river are dwindling, in no small part due to the legacy of toxic pollution that Occidental Chemical left behind. Now, with Puget Sound Energy's planned construction of an LNG facility near that site (in fact, the toxic plumes from Occidental extend underneath the site of the proposed plant), those toxic chemicals, which are now leaching slowly, will be rapidly introduced into the bay.

There are two polluted plumes of contaminated water under the Occidental site, which is in an earthquake and lahar zone. An earthquake or other disaster could send this toxic soup into Puget Sound. Today, the pollution plume is the size of five CenturyLink Fields, is deeper than the Tacoma Dome is tall, and stretches underneath the Hylebos to Marine View Drive. It includes heavy metals, PCBs and a range of highly dangerous volatile organic chemicals. In some places, the pH is as high as 14, which is stronger than drain cleaner. It is difficult to imagine how corrosive these chemicals are to Puget Sound and its marine life.

Occidental Chemical Corporation is pushing for a cleanup that would remove only 41% of the toxic pollution. Cleaning less than half of this dangerous contamination is unacceptable. Despite the fact that Occidental brought in a whopping \$152 million in pre-tax profits during last quarter alone, the company is advocating for a cheap option instead of an effective one. We cannot afford to let polluters walk away from their mess. We need the strongest and quickest cleanup possible.

Sincerely,

William Kupinse
Tacoma, WA 98407