

South Tacoma Neighborhood Council

06/21/2017

Kerry Graber, Site Manager
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Re: Comments on Feasibility Study, Occidental Chemical Corp.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to provide comments on the Occidental Chemical Superfund cleanup, the worst contamination left in Commencement Bay.

My name is Venus Dergan. I am a longtime resident of Tacoma and Board member on the South Tacoma Neighborhood Council. I am deeply concerned about toxic contamination from the Occidental Chemical Corporation.

Part of what I love about Tacoma is its story of moving from a historical legacy of industrial pollution to a community with a revitalized connection to its waters. Commencement Bay, including the Hylebos Waterway, is a source of pride for both myself and the larger community and it deserves a full and long-lasting cleanup.

The contamination from Occidental is unacceptable. Hundreds of thousands of pounds of toxic, cancer-causing chemicals are spread under the site, the Hylebos Waterway, and probably Commencement Bay.

In order to cut costs, Occidental Chemical Corporation is setting the stage to walk away from this mess without a comprehensive cleanup. Occidental is proposing a cleanup plan that would leave nearly two thirds of their pollution in the ground – highly toxic pollution right underneath a vulnerable aquatic ecosystem.

This is absolutely unacceptable - this is not acceptable for me, for my family, for my community, for my environment, or for my City. Tacoma deserves better.

We cannot afford to let Occidental walk away from their mess – they must be held accountable for the strongest cleanup possible. I urge Ecology to choose the cleanup plan that removes as much toxic pollution as possible. We cannot allow the profits of polluters to outweigh the importance of environmental protection. Let's set the example of good practices!

Occidental should not be able to argue that it's too big of a mess – they created it and they are responsible for a complete and acceptable clean-up. For the safety of our environment, Ecology needs to hold them fully accountable for a real cleanup to the "maximum extent practicable" as required by the Model Toxics Control Act. What Occidental is proposing is unacceptable. Please help Tacoma keep Commencement Bay and the Hylebos Waterway clean for our future!

Sincerely,

Venus Dergan
Tacoma Resident
Manitou Representative
South Tacoma Neighborhood Council
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