

Fact Sheet

N. Bradford Street – PCBs Cleanup Project

The N. Bradford Street cleanup project is addressing soil contamination in and around the railroad tracks next to Cathedral Park (see image right). **This contamination does not present an immediate risk to public health.** However, more sampling is necessary to determine what cleanup actions are needed to ensure the long-term protection of human health and the environment including those who regularly come into contact with soil in this area.

The contamination is from a class of chemicals called polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs, which were historically used as coolants and lubricants. PCBs were banned in 1977 due to their toxic impacts on human health and persistence in the environment. DEQ is addressing this contamination through its cleanup process, and the first step is getting more data.

To minimize your exposure if you're in this area, DEQ and Oregon Health Authority recommend:

- Staying on the paved path when crossing the railroad
- Not walking on or along the railroad
- Avoiding bare soil along the railroad



What is DEQ doing about this?

DEQ is working with the parties that may have contributed to the contamination in this area, and supervising environmental sampling and efforts to prevent contact with the contamination. In addition, you will see signs like the one on the right, posted along the railroad tracks that advise people to stay on the paved path. DEQ and Oregon Health Authority (OHA) are meeting with community members regularly to update everyone on the project and collaborate on ways to get clear health information to the community. These signs are an outcome of that partnership. For the most up-to-date information about the N. Bradford Street Cleanup Project, go to deqblog.com/nbradford-street, or join our email list at bit.ly/nbradford-list.

Contaminated Soil Suelo Contaminado



Do not walk on or around tracks. Use the path.
No camine en las vías ni en los alrededores. Use el camino.

Đất Bị Ô Nhiễm
Không được đi trên hoặc đi xung quanh đường ray tàu hỏa. Hãy đi trên đường mòn.

Забруднення ґрунту
Не ходіть залізничними коліями або поруч із ними. Використовуйте доріжки.

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Current Status:

In March 2023, DEQ received additional sampling results collected by Peninsula Iron Works and Union Pacific Railroad in this area. DEQ and OHA evaluated these data to confirm our understanding of where the higher soil concentrations are located. Here is what we know so far:

- DEQ and OHA have determined that there are not immediate health risks for short-term contact with soil.
- The highest concentrations remain along the railroad right-of-way in front of PIW building. The soil concentrations exceed DEQ's screening levels for long term, repeated contact for workers and park users. We still recommend the public not walk along this area.
- In one part of the park, levels of PCBs are above DEQ's screening level. The City of Portland Bureau of Parks and Recreation has placed additional mulch in this area and OHA has recommended that they regularly inspect and maintain the grass and mulch in the area as a precaution.

Next Steps:

- DEQ is working with Peninsula Iron Works to address the highest soil concentrations to reduce contact with the soil. DEQ expects this work to be completed in 2023. This will include placement of a temporary cover, such as a construction fabric material, preparation of a work plan for a more robust, long-term solution which may include soil removal and replacement.

Get more information

The most up-to-date information on this project and answers to frequently asked questions are available online at deqblog.com/nbradford-street.

You can also direct any questions to nbradfordst@deq.oregon.gov or leave us a voicemail at 503-229-6488, and we'll get back to you in three business days.

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