

# SLIPPERFUND

## Fact Sheet

OESER COMPANY SITE  
Bellingham, Washington



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

October 2000

### Community Informational Meeting

The U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) would like to share the information that has been gathered over the past several months on the Oeser Company site.

Community Informational Meeting  
Wednesday, October 18, 2000  
Shuksan Middle School  
2713 Alderwood Avenue  
Bellingham, WA

EPA will discuss the results of investigations to date and will answer any questions you may have.

### What We've Done So Far!

In October 1998, EPA began work on a study called a "Remedial Investigation/ Feasibility Study" (RI/FS) at the Oeser Company. The goal of the RI/FS is to gather

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enough information to make sound decisions and decide which remedy appears to be the most appropriate for the site. The first step in this process, the site characterization, has been completed at the Oeser Company. This provides EPA with information on the types of contaminants at the site and the extent of contamination.

### Samples Taken Since the Summer of 1999

Off-Facility Residential and Background Surface Soil Sampling- 81 samples  
Groundwater Monitoring - approximately 35 shallow and deep wells sampled 4 times/year  
Little Squalicum Creek seeps/surface water - 9 samples in July and December, 1999  
Little Squalicum Creek Sediments - 11 samples  
Little Squalicum Creek bank soil samples - 46 samples  
Air Monitoring - 10 locations in July and September, 1999  
On-Facility Soil Sampling - 327 borings  
Groundwater Monitoring Wells - 15 new wells  
Southslope blackberry samples - 4



The data from this work has been reviewed and checked for quality. The next step in the RI/FS process is to begin interpretation of the results and prepare a risk assessment. The risk assessment determines the amount of risk the site poses to people, plants and animals. During the public meeting EPA will be prepared to discuss this work and go over the next steps in the process.

## **Background**

The Oeser Company, located at 730 Marine Drive in a mixed residential and industrial area of Bellingham, prepares and treats wood poles for utility companies. Most of the 23.5 acre site is used to store logs, both treated and untreated. The wood-treating plant covers about three acres of the site. Creosote has been used as a wood-treating preservative in the past and was stored on the site. Since the 1970s, oil containing pentachlorophenol (PCP) has been used as the primary wood treating agent.

A site assessment done in January 1997, along with previous investigations, found elevated levels of two hazardous chemicals, pentachlorophenol (PCP) and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) in the soil. These contaminants were also present in shallow and deep groundwater, and in the Little Squalicum Creek which flows through a ravine south of the site into Bellingham Bay. In April

1997, further investigations revealed elevated levels of dioxins in surface soil. The Oeser Company site was added to EPA's National Priorities List on September 25, 1997. This is a list of the most highly contaminated sites needing cleanup.

Work to stabilize and secure the site took place between September 1997 and September 1998. The goals were to protect workers and trespassers from direct contact with dioxin/furan-contaminated surface soils, and to remove the PCP and PAH-contaminated soil believed to be the source of groundwater contamination. Activities included: fencing the site; removal of stored creosote; capping areas to prevent contact with contaminants and wind blown dust; excavation and transportation of 88 rail cars (8,500 tons) of PCP-contaminated soil and 27,000 gallons of PCP-contaminated liquid off the site and capping of the excavated area with asphalt; and capping an area of dioxin contaminated soil with asphalt.



## Information Repositories

Documents related to the Oeser Company site, as well as a Community Involvement Plan, can be reviewed at:

City of Bellingham Library  
210 Central  
Bellingham, WA

U. S. EPA  
1200 Sixth Avenue  
7th Floor Records Center  
Seattle, WA

For More Information Please Contact:

**Bill Adams**, EPA Project Manager, at  
(206) 553-2806 or

**Jeanne O'Dell**, Community Involvement Coordinator, at  
(206) 553-6919 or

Call our toll free number 1-800-424-4372.

*To ensure effective communication with everyone, additional services can be made available to persons with disabilities by contacting one of the numbers listed above.*



United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency

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Region 10 (ECO-081)  
1200 Sixth Avenue  
Seattle WA 98101

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