

# SUPERFUND

## Fact Sheet

### HAMILTON/LABREE SITE

Chehalis, Washington



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

September 2001

*Next spring, EPA will begin to install a new water line to people affected by contaminated groundwater from the Hamilton/Labree Superfund site. This water line will provide a permanent source of clean, safe water for domestic use. EPA is planning to begin installing the water line in the summer of 2002, and to complete it in October 2002. EPA is also continuing to work with the S. C. Breen Construction Company, a potentially responsible party for the site, on long-term cleanup.*

### **Why A New Water Line?**

Perchloroethylene (PCE) has been found in several wells in the area. Six of these well owners, whose wells show the highest levels of this contaminant, have been receiving bottled water for the past six years to protect them from PCE exposure. Recent testing shows that water from several other wells in the vicinity that draw water from the shallow aquifer is also contaminated. The tests found PCE at levels below five micrograms per liter (5- $\mu\text{g/L}$ ), which is the safe drinking water standard set by the Washington Department of Ecology. However, studies show that these wells are downgradient of the contaminated groundwater plume from the Hamilton/Labree site, and will likely become more contaminated in the future. Therefore, EPA will hook up the new water line to these wells to ensure they have a source of water that is not contaminated by PCE.

EPA is working closely with the city of Chehalis and Lewis County to install this water line. It will extend from an existing city water main on the east side of Interstate 5, underneath I-5, then west of the freeway to the wells. In October, EPA plans to do surveying to help us decide how the water pipe should be aligned to provide adequate flow. We will be requesting access to many properties to do this work.

### **Stay Tuned for News on Water Line Route**

In mid-September, the city of Chehalis will approve one of four routes to extend the water line from the east side of the freeway to the west side. Computer modeling is currently

underway to determine which route will provide the required flow of water at the required pressure. After the best route is approved, EPA will let you know about the route and more specific next steps.

### **Questions or Concerns?**

If you have issues or concerns about this project, please call Debra Sherbina at 1-800-424-4372, extension 0247; e-mail: [sherbina.debra@epa.gov](mailto:sherbina.debra@epa.gov). You can also mail your comments to Debra Sherbina, EPA Region 10, 1200 Sixth Avenue, ECO-081, Seattle, Washington 98101.

- EPA will cover all costs for installation of the water line to the affected wells, including the cost of the water meter and the city's "hook up" fee. The residents will be responsible for paying future water bills to the city of Chehalis. If any property owners choose not to be hooked up to the new water line at this time, they will be responsible for paying for hook up costs if they should decide to receive water from the new line in the future.
- EPA will negotiate with each property owner regarding closure of private wells ("well abandonment"). EPA will disconnect wells from houses and businesses to prevent cross-contamination of the new water line.
- EPA will stop supplying bottled water when the new water line is completed, since it is intended to provide a permanent source of safe water.
- The City of Chehalis will take over the operation and maintenance of the water line after EPA builds it and it is approved by the City.

## Other Cleanup Options To Protect Drinking Water Not Adequate or Feasible

In summer 2000, EPA collected soil and groundwater samples to locate the source and extent of the contamination associated with the area south of Hamilton Road (the "Hamilton Road impact area"). The sampling confirmed that high levels of PCE exist west of I-5, across Hamilton Road from the United Rentals property. This source is contributing to the groundwater contaminant plume. Initially, EPA believed that we might find buried drums at this location, which could be easily dug up and removed. Tests have revealed, however, that the contamination is highly concentrated but not contained in drums.

Excavation and removal is not feasible because the contamination is buried 15 to 40 feet below the soil surface. In-place ("in situ") treatment is an option, but would most likely not clean it up enough to meet safe drinking water standards. Presently, the safest step is to hook up the new water line to the affected properties, providing a permanent alternate water source not contaminated with PCE. EPA is also working on cleaning up the site's contaminated groundwater plume for the long-term.

## Site Background

The Hamilton-Labree site is located near the intersection of Hamilton and Labree Roads. It is about three miles south of Chehalis, Washington, west of Interstate 5. An aquifer system, which includes a shallow and a deep aquifer, lies underneath the site. The shallow aquifer supplies drinking water, and is separated from the deep aquifer by approximately 100 feet of clay. There are a total of 252 drinking water wells that receive water from the shallow aquifer, and three public supply wells that serve about 1,256 people. All of these wells are within three to four miles of the intersection of Hamilton and Labree Roads. PCE has been found in several of these wells. Of these wells, six contain PCE above the safe drinking water level of five micrograms/liter, and are currently receiving bottled water for

domestic use.

In August 1999, Ecology discovered 64 drums containing PCE buried near the intersection of Hamilton and Labree Roads. These were removed and taken to a permitted disposal facility. The S. C. Breen Construction Company (Breen) was named as a potentially responsible party (PRP) for the site, and Ecology requested EPA involvement. In July 2000 the site was added to EPA's National Priorities List (NPL) of contaminated sites identified for long-term cleanup.

## The Long-Term Cleanup: Next Steps

An Administrative Order on Consent (AOC) between EPA and Breen will be signed this fall. Under the AOC, Breen will conduct a comprehensive investigation and evaluation of cleanup alternatives under EPA oversight. A search for other PRPs is continuing.

### Health Effects of Perchloroethylene (PCE)

PCE is a chemical commonly used in metal degreasing and cleaning operations, dry cleaning, and other industrial uses. It belongs to a family of chemicals known as "volatile organic compounds" (VOCs) which move easily through soil and water, and may be harmful to people who are exposed to them. Potential health problems from exposure depend on how the chemical entered the body, how long and how often a person has been exposed, and how sensitive a person is to its effect. It has the potential to cause cancer in humans. For more detailed information on the potential long- and short-term health effects of PCE, go to the following link from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Diseases Registry (ATSDR) web page: <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/tfacts18.html>

**Contact Information**

*If you have technical questions about the new water line, please call:*

**Bill Longston**, Project Manager

at **(206) 553-1679**

E-mail: [longston.william@epa.gov](mailto:longston.william@epa.gov)

*For technical questions about the long-term site cleanup, please call:*

**Sally Thomas**, Project Manager

at **(206) 553-2102**

E-mail: [thomas.sally@epa.gov](mailto:thomas.sally@epa.gov)

*If you have other questions or concerns about the new water line or long-term cleanup of the site, or would like information on community involvement, please call:*

**Debra Sherbina**, Community Involvement Coordinator

at **(206) 553-0247**

E-mail: [sherbina.debra@epa.gov](mailto:sherbina.debra@epa.gov)

You may also reach us through our toll free number: **1-800-424-4372**

*EPA's Internet homepage:*

**<http://www.epa.gov/r10earth>**

EPA has developed a website for the Hamilton/Labree site. You can find the Community Involvement Plan and other site information by accessing the Region 10 web page at [www.epa.gov/r10earth](http://www.epa.gov/r10earth), and clicking on "Index," then "H."

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



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

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