

# SUPERFUND

## Fact Sheet

### HAMILTON/LABREE SITE

Chehalis, Washington



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

February 2003

## New Water Line Complete

EPA has finished installing the new water line for the Hamilton/Labree Superfund Site near Chehalis. It provides clean, safe water to the 18 homes and businesses affected by tetrachloroethylene (PCE)-contaminated groundwater in their wells. As each property was hooked up to city water, EPA stopped supplying bottled water.

EPA worked closely with the city of Chehalis and Lewis County on building the water line, which extends from a city water line on the east side of Interstate 5 to affected homes and businesses west of the freeway. After the city approves the water line, the city will own, maintain and operate it. This

is anticipated to occur in the next two months. Until the new line is accepted by the City, the EPA will retain ownership of the line and be responsible for related issues and repairs.

The water line ends at 2296 Rice Road, about 130 feet south of the former Smith Tractor office

building on Hamilton Road North. SelecTrucks now occupies this space. Monitoring results over the past eight years indicate that contamination in the groundwater is moving to the northwest. The contamination is not expected to affect wells located west of 2296 Rice Road.



*New Water Line  
Supplies  
Clean Water  
to Residents .*

## Steps Taken to Lessen Disruption

EPA needed to remove only a few trees and plants to properly install the water line. In most cases, EPA contractors worked around existing trees, plant and shrubs.

EPA entered into agreements with each property owner to ensure that anything damaged or removed during construction was restored or replaced. Hand work and specialized equipment preserved vegetation even as close as two feet from the new line.

## About Water Line Capacity

If the contaminated groundwater spreads farther in the future, the water line is designed to allow for some additional businesses and residences to be hooked up. The water line can accept up to 40 service connections.

The extra water line capacity is meant to address contamination from the site; it is not meant to provide water service for new growth in the area. In fact, current regulations prohibit the city of Chehalis from providing service outside its urban growth area, except to address health emergencies.

## Water Line Costs

EPA covered all costs for hooking up the water line to existing homes and businesses with affected wells, including the cost of the water meters and the city's connection fees. Property owners will be responsible for paying future water bills to the city of Chehalis. The average city water bill for a residence outside the city limits is about \$35 per month.

## Will the Contaminated Wells Remain Open?

EPA disconnected all contaminated wells from the insides of houses and businesses, as they were hooked up to the new water line. This prevents the city water from being cross-contaminated with well water. For now, most of the wells remain connected to outside spigots for watering lawns and gardens. EPA also needs access to some wells to continue tracking contaminant movement.

As EPA learns more about the contamination and develops final cleanup plans for the site, it is possible that private wells will need to be permanently closed to protect residents' health. If it is necessary to permanently close any wells, EPA will work closely with each property owner on well closure.



*Workers Assemble Pipe for Water Line.*

## Update: EPA's Long-term Cleanup Study

In October 2001, EPA and the S. C. Breen Construction Company, a potentially responsible party for the site, signed an administrative order on consent. Under this order, Breen will do a comprehensive study and evaluation of cleanup alternatives with EPA oversight. This study is called a "Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study" (RI/FS).

This past summer, Breen, through its contractor Farallon Consulting, gathered soil and water samples at the site. About 75 groundwater samples, 35 soil samples and six surface water samples were collected. Farallon took groundwater samples from private drinking water wells, existing monitoring wells, nine new permanent monitoring wells, and 24 additional check points.

These tests will better define how far the contamination extends and help develop cleanup options. EPA and Farallon are analyzing the latest data and designing plans for the study's next step, to take place in early 2003. In the meantime, Farallon will test selected groundwater supply wells and monitoring wells four times a year. EPA will continue to inform the community about test results.

After site investigations are done, EPA will look closely at cleanup alternatives and propose a cleanup plan. At this time, the data shows a significant source of PCE contamination west of Interstate 5, near the United Rentals property. Investigations have not yet revealed the potentially responsible parties for this area of the site. However, EPA is open to any new information and may identify the parties if such information becomes available.

### Site History

The Hamilton/Labree site is on properties near the intersection of Hamilton and Labree Roads. It is about three miles south of Chehalis, Washington, along Interstate 5. An aquifer system, including a shallow and a deep aquifer, lies under the site. The shallow aquifer supplies drinking water to local homes and businesses, and is separated from the deep aquifer by about 100 feet of clay. To date, PCE contamination has been found in 10 private water supply wells in the shallow aquifer. Owners of these wells received bottled water, first provided by the Washington State Department of Ecology. EPA supplied the bottled water until the new water line was built, and continues to monitor the area to protect other drinking water wells.

In July 2000, EPA placed the site on the Superfund National Priorities List of hazardous waste sites targeted for cleanup. In summer 2000, EPA tested soil and groundwater to find the source and extent of the PCE contamination associated with the area south of Hamilton Road. This PCE is contributing to the groundwater contamination. The tests confirmed high levels of PCE west of Interstate 5, near the United Rentals property. EPA plans to clean up this source and any other significant sources of PCE contamination.

In October 2001, a number of private wells along Rice Road were tested for the first time. Fortunately, PCE was not found in any. However, PCE was found in all wells where it was previously detected. EPA will immediately notify property owners if PCE is found in their wells.

### About Tetrachloroethylene

PCE is a chemical commonly used for metal degreasing and cleaning, dry cleaning and other industrial activities. It belongs to a family of chemicals called "volatile organic compounds." These chemicals move easily through the environment and may harm people who are exposed to them. Volatile organic compounds can cause health problems depending 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. PCE can cause cancer in humans.

Information on potential health effects of PCE is on the Agency for Toxic Substances and Diseases Registry (ATSDR) web page: <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/tfacts18.html>.

## For More Information

*For questions about **long-term cleanup**:*

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*For questions about the **water line project**:*

**Carl Kitz**, Removal Project Manager

**(206) 553-1671**

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*For general information:*

**Debra Sherbina**,

Community Involvement Coordinator

**(206) 553-0247**

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EPA's toll free number: **1-800-424-4372**

*For information on possible health effects:*

The Washington Department of Health has prepared health consultations on Hamilton/Labree area exposures. For more information please call **Paul Marchant** at **(360) 236-3375**.

EPA's Webpage on Hamilton/Labree:

Go to the EPA Region 10 webpage at

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

click on "Index," then "H."

*To request reasonable accommodations:*

For people with disabilities:

please call Debra Sherbina at 206-553-0247

(toll-free at 1-800-424-4372).

For TTY users: call 1-800-877-8339 and give the operator Debra Sherbina's phone number.