

MTCA's legacy: two decades of cleaning up toxic sites, preventing future ones

In 1988, Washington voters passed Initiative 97, the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA). The act specifically authorized funding for a broad range of toxic cleanup, management, and prevention purposes and anticipated the need to respond to new threats from toxic materials. To do this work, the voters authorized a tax on hazardous materials (the Hazardous Substance Tax) including petroleum products, pesticides, and some chemicals.

Today, more than two decades later, there continues to be broad public support for a wide range of programs to clean up hazardous waste sites and address specific toxic threats to public health and the environment.

Governor Gregoire's 2011-13 budget priorities align with voters' original intent and address emerging new toxic threats

The budget for 2011-13 uses MTCA funds wisely and sustainably, and continues to focus on balancing toxic site cleanup, stormwater, vital prevention / management investments and emerging toxic threats to air, land and water quality.

\$145.6 million in new MTCA Capital Investments:

- Toxic Site Cleanups - \$70.0 M.
- Stormwater Grants - \$40.0 M.
- Prevention and Management - \$35.6 M.

\$ 21.5 million in new MTCA Operating Investments:

- Protect Clean Water.
- Prevent Toxic Stormwater Pollution.
- Protect Shorelines.
- Address Toxic Air Pollution.
- Stabilize the Oil Spill Prevention Account.

MTCA spells out priorities for use of the Hazardous Substance Tax

A partial list of the priorities in the law:

- Grants to communities and ports for cleaning up toxic sites.
- State hazardous & solid waste planning, management, regulation, enforcement, technical assistance and public education.
- Local hazardous & solid waste planning and programs.
- State hazardous waste cleanup.
- State matching funds required under federal cleanup law.
- State reduction, recycling and disposal of hazardous wastes from households, small businesses and agriculture.
- Prevention grants to local communities for waste management and recycling.
- Hazardous materials emergency response training.
- Water and environmental health protection and monitoring.
- Funding for water pollution control projects.
- Grants to citizen groups to encourage public participation in pollution prevention and toxic cleanup efforts.
- Alternative management technologies for hazardous waste.
- Limited methamphetamine lab cleanup.
- Cleanup and disposal of hazardous substances from abandoned and derelict vessels.

Voters spell out MTCA spending formula

By law (RCW 70.105D.070), 53% of the Hazardous Substance Tax is dedicated for cleanup, prevention and management activities in local communities and 47% for state cleanup, prevention and management activities. Voters authorized a broad range of uses for MTCA to address both existing needs and emerging problems. And the Legislature responded by authorizing new uses to address emerging issues of air quality (wood stove and diesel emissions), clean water (stormwater and shoreline protection), and to build on the oil spill prevention and hazardous materials response activities outlined in Initiative 97.

State agencies and local communities use MTCA to clean up and prevent toxic pollution across the state

- Remedial Action Grants to local communities across the state to help clean up toxic sites.
- Cleaning up toxic sites in Puget Sound.
- Cleaning up toxic sites in Eastern Washington.
- Grants to local communities to address stormwater pollution.
- Grants to local communities to manage waste and recycling programs.
- Hazardous material and oil spill prevention, preparedness and response activities.
- Cleaning up schoolyards and daycare centers across the state.
- Monitoring chemical pollution in drinking water.
- Grants to citizen groups to participate in cleanup and prevention activities in their local communities.
- Grants to local communities to reduce health threats from diesel emissions and reduce pollution from wood stoves.
- Identification, disposal, and compliance of pesticide waste.
- Training firefighters to respond to hazardous materials.
- Grants to local communities to keep toxics out of Puget Sound.

Questions?

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MTCA Annual Report for 2008: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/biblio/0809048.html>

Special Accommodations

If you need this document in a format for the visually impaired call the Toxics Cleanup Program at (360) 407-7000. Persons with hearing loss, call 711 for Washington Relay Service. Persons with a speech disability, call 877-833-6341.

