

Soil Cleanup at Vassault Park

The Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) is cleaning up soil contamination at Vassault Park in Tacoma. This is part of Ecology's ongoing work to clean up arsenic and lead. These toxic metals were carried by the wind from the former Asarco copper smelter and contaminated soil over a large area of Puget Sound.

The **Soil Safety Program** provides free soil sampling and cleanup for play areas at schools, childcares, parks, and camps. A \$94.6 million settlement from Asarco funds this work.

What are the health risks?

Contamination levels at Vassault **do not pose an immediate health threat**. However, long-term exposure to **arsenic** can contribute to heart disease, diabetes, and certain cancers. **Lead** is especially harmful for young children. It can damage the developing nervous system and lead to behavioral problems.

We recommend taking **healthy actions** (above right) to lower your exposure.

Soil cleanup will start late June 2014

Surface soils at Vassault Park average 90 parts per million (ppm) arsenic. The state cleanup level for arsenic is 20 ppm. We plan to remove 6 - 12 inches of soil from 8 acres of playfields. We will then bring in new topsoil and reseed the lawn. Metro Parks Tacoma will coordinate drainage improvements during the cleanup work.

The baseball diamonds and soccer field will reopen in 2015, after grass has fully grown back. You can learn more at our May 19 neighborhood meeting (see back).

Other Tacoma park cleanups

Ecology previously worked with Tacoma Metro Parks to clean up soil at Titlow Park and Jane Clark Park. Over the next two years, Ecology plans to replace soil in play areas at Point Defiance, Baltimore, and Optimist parks.

What's in the soil in my yard?

If you live near Vassault Park, we may already have sampling results for your yard. To check, visit our online database: <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/areispublic/>. If you do not find results on the database, you can sign up for free soil sampling by contacting the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department (see box at right).

Healthy Actions



Please continue to enjoy your parks! You can use Healthy Actions to protect your family from contaminated soil:

- Wash hands after working or playing outside.
- Take off shoes or use a doormat.
- Vacuum and damp dust regularly.
- Keep children's toys free of dirt.
- Wash fruits and vegetables from your garden.

More Information

Questions or concerns about cleanup at Vassault Park

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Roger Stanton, Metro Parks Tacoma
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E-mail: RogerS@tacomaparks.com

Health Information and Soil Sampling

Tacoma-Pierce County Health Dept.
Glenn Rollins
Phone: (253) 798-3503
E-mail: DirtAlert@tpchd.org

Department of Ecology's Tacoma Smelter Plume website

<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/toxics/tacoma-smelter.html>

Facility Site ID #: 89267963

