



Fact Sheet

Residential yard cleanups near J.H. Baxter

What's happening?

DEQ is completing residential yard cleanup in a portion of Eugene's Bethel neighborhood north of Roosevelt Boulevard. Cleanup work started in January 2024 on the first property and continued through the first week in June. Cleanup involves excavating and disposing of contaminated soil and replacing with clean soil, followed by yard restoration. A total of seven properties have been cleaned up by DEQ in 2024.

Background

From 2021 to 2023, DEQ and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency collected soil samples from 62 residential properties in the neighborhood north of the J.H. Baxter & Co. wood treatment facility at 3494 Roosevelt Boulevard in west Eugene. Soil sampling has detected elevated levels of dioxins, which are a component of wood treating chemicals that were used at the Baxter facility. J.H. Baxter closed in 2022, and the company has indicated that they cannot pay for the cleanup work needed at the former treatment plant, or in the neighborhood. DEQ has used state cleanup funds to clean up residential properties with the highest levels of dioxin contamination.

What are Dioxins?

Dioxins are a group of chemicals that are formed during industrial processes such as the bleaching process in pulp and papermaking. They were also present in pentachlorophenol, which is a wood treating chemical formerly used at J.H. Baxter. Dioxins can also be generated during the burning of organic materials, including wildfires. Studies have shown that exposure to dioxins increases the risk of several types of cancer. More information about dioxins and related health effects can be found in the ToxFaq (<https://bit.ly/3DExa2E>) for chlorinated dibenzo-p-dioxins (CDDs).



What's next?

The extent of soil contamination in the neighborhood north of Roosevelt has not been defined. EPA has been assisting DEQ by conducting residential yard sampling for this project, and additional sampling is planned in summer 2024 along the north end of Baxter Street and Alva Park Drive near Elmira Street. This additional sampling will help determine the extent and level of contamination in the neighborhood and assist in the design and development of future residential cleanup work.

Where can I get more information?

DEQ's J.H. Baxter's information webpage: ordeq.org/JHBaxter.



You can also contact DEQ's Cleanup Project Manager Sarah Eagle at 971-357-5275 or sarah.eagle@deq.oregon.gov.

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