



Fact Sheet

Additional Soil Sampling in Residential Yards Near J.H. Baxter & Co. Wood Treatment Facility in Eugene

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality is working with the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency to collect soil samples in residential yards near the J. H. Baxter & Co. wood treatment facility in Eugene to determine if contaminants from the plant have accumulated in the neighborhood. This sampling is scheduled to occur in May and June 2022.

What's happening

DEQ and its contractors will also be in the neighborhood collecting samples from five yards in preparation for the cleanup of contaminated soil. The cleanups are expected to take place in early summer. Sampling consists of numerous small soil cores taken at various locations in each yard. The soil core is about the size of a quarter and about six inches deep. Baxter "mothballed" the facility, as described by the company, on Jan. 31, 2022, but environmental regulation continues by DEQ and the Lane Regional Air Protection Agency. Along with overseeing the ongoing cleanup, DEQ regulates stormwater, groundwater, process water and hazardous waste at Baxter. LRAPA oversees Baxter's air quality permit. Results from previous residential yard sampling indicated that three yards should be cleaned up as soon as possible. Samples will be collected from 30 additional yards in the neighborhood to determine how far away from the facility the off-site contamination is located and if any additional yards will need to be cleaned up. DEQ continues to work with LRAPA, Oregon Health Authority, and the City of Eugene to investigate the sources and extent of the contamination and any potential health risks to the community.

Background

The 31-acre site at 85 Baxter Street was an active wood treatment facility since the early 1940s. Historical spills and operational practices have resulted in soil and groundwater contamination. The facility has also had issues with air emissions and concerns from residents about odors and possible, related health effects.

Over the years, DEQ and LRAPA have investigated the facility and issued numerous enforcement actions and required cleanup measures. In October 2019, DEQ issued a cleanup plan, called a Record of Decision, which required offsite sampling along with other cleanup actions on the Baxter property. Also in 2019, LRAPA included Baxter in the first set of facilities in Lane County to go through the Cleaner Air Oregon process, as part of their air discharge permitting. The process includes emissions inventory and risk assessment

Next steps

As soon as the results from the yard-specific sampling are available, DEQ will share the results with residents. DEQ also plans to have a general public meeting to share the results and next steps. Results are expected back by late July or early August.

Where can I get more information?

Visit DEQ's Baxter web page at ordeq.org/JHBaxter. Information on the Cleaner Air Oregon Process can be found at LRAPA's web page at bit.ly/3OVJhf0. You can also contact DEQ's Cleanup Project Manager Susan Turnblom at 541-687-7464, DEQWRCleanup@deq.state.or.us; LRAPA Public Information Officer Travis Knudsen at 541-736-1056, ext. 217, travis@lrapa.org; OHA Environmental Health Assessment Program at 971-673-0482, ehap.info@state.or.us.

Alternative formats

A Spanish translation is on the back side, but DEQ can provide documents in an alternate format or in a language other than these two upon request. Call DEQ at 800-452-4011 or email deqinfo@deq.state.or.us.



Scan to visit DEQ's
J.H. Baxter page