



Interlachen Community Fact Sheet #9

Groundwater Contamination in East Multnomah County

Technical Report EWR-3-96

Portland State University Advisory Panel Recommendations

On behalf of the Friends of Blue and Fairview Lake, a panel was formed to evaluate the work of the Responsible Parties, State of Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), and other interested parties concerning a groundwater contamination site in East Multnomah County (EMC). This review was funded by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through their Technical Assistance Grant (TAG) program. This list is a public response to the Department of Environmental Quality Draft Record of Decision concerning the East Multnomah County groundwater remediation plans for the Troutdale Gravel Aquifer (TGA) at the Cascade site and the Troutdale Sandstone Aquifer (TSA) at both Boeing and Cascade sites.

The following issues were identified by our advisory panel:

- Monitoring for Chromium and other known heavy metal contaminants should be required for treated effluents from the TGA remediation effort at Cascade and plans for heavy metal removal prior to discharge into nearby surface waters should be developed
- Inhalation of volatile organics from pump-and-treat facilities needs to be re-evaluated to determine if a public health risk exists under the proposed remediation plan
- Drinking water from the SGA aquifer wells PMX-195 and PMX-410 that have had several “hits” of TCE should be immediately removed from public consumption
- Recognizing that the remediation effort should proceed as fast as possible to ensure that the plume does not spread further, there have been no clear guidelines that DEQ would use to assess performance of the TSA remediation effort, nor a list of actions required if performance guidelines were not followed
- According to the DEQ Draft Record of Decision, the computer model of the aquifer system “has been used to evaluate the effects of well pumping on the spread of contamination, to evaluate potential threats to existing well users, ... and to develop cleanup options for the groundwater contamination.” The computer model has flaws that could render its use in making management decisions inappropriate.

- An oversight in the Draft Record of Decision has been to propose remediation strategies without linking these strategies to surface water discharge limitations that are being formulated as a result of the TMDL process for the Columbia Slough. The TMDL process on the Columbia Slough may not allow the discharge of the pump-and-treat water to the Slough system as a result of nutrient or heavy metal loadings.
- City of Portland needs to operate its wellfield with the understanding that their actions can substantially affect the plume's movement. Any unilateral pumping by the City without regard for the plume movement could endanger the existing groundwater supply of the community of Blue and Fairview Lake.