

# ATSDR Public Health Investment

## Oregon

### CDC/ATSDR support helps Oregon reduce exposures to hazardous substances in the environment

ATSDR funds 25 cooperative agreements to help states build their capacity to assess and respond to site-specific issues involving human exposure to hazardous substances in the environment.

### Public Health in Action

**Willamette Cove** — Oregon EHAP identified the Willamette Cove, a natural area within the Portland Harbor Superfund Site, as an area of health concern after three soil samples showed high lead levels. EHAP recommended that people avoid the area and that agencies prioritize the site for comprehensive sampling and clean-up. DEQ convinced the owners to evaluate the upland area further since transients visit that area. The results showed very high levels of dioxins, so DEQ conducted emergency removal focused on elevated dioxins, but also for metals and PCBs. This is now an early action Superfund site.

### Key projects

- **Precision Castparts Corporation** — The PCC Johnson Creek Complex in SE Portland manufactures aerospace, power, and industrial products. The nearby community has long been concerned about contamination from the facility and possible health risks. Moss samples taken near the facility revealed relatively high levels of cobalt and nickel. To evaluate possible exposure levels, Oregon DEQ collected air and soil samples and additional environmental data. In 2008, PCC voluntarily agreed to investigate contamination from PCE, TCE, metals (chromium and nickel), and PCBs in soil, groundwater, stormwater, and surface water (in Johnson Creek); the investigation is ongoing. ATSDR is supporting Oregon with scientific and technical expertise to evaluate environmental data and potential long-term health risks before and after the facility reduced emissions. Oregon continues to consult with community members to address local health concerns.
- **Sweet Home Mill (Willamette Industries, Former)** — This 150-acre saw mill and wood product manufacturing facility operated between 1934 and 2009. While many of the buildings have been demolished and all historical milling equipment has been removed, nearby residents and local authorities are concerned about pentachlorophenol in soil and heavy oil-range hydrocarbons in log pond sediments. Nearby residents are also concerned about asbestos, lead-based paint, and other contaminants migrating offsite from dust, flooding, and two fires at the site. ATSDR has assisted Oregon with providing technical assistance and guidance to ongoing site assessment activities. Oregon continues to consult with community members to address local health concerns.

### State Priorities

- **Air quality** — Identifying, prioritizing, and evaluating industrial air emission sites that may potentially harm the environment and human health; developing new health-based rules to control industrial air emissions.
- **Brownfields** — Transforming brownfields into community assets that improve health and quality of life for communities; participating in redevelopment and providing health input.
- **Environmental justice** — Promoting environmental justice and health equity by identifying and prioritizing sites where inequities exist, creating opportunities for meaningful participation in the health assessment process, and conducting culturally appropriate health education and outreach.

### Oregon

#### Award amount:

\$484,352 per year

Term: 3 years

Grantee since: 2001

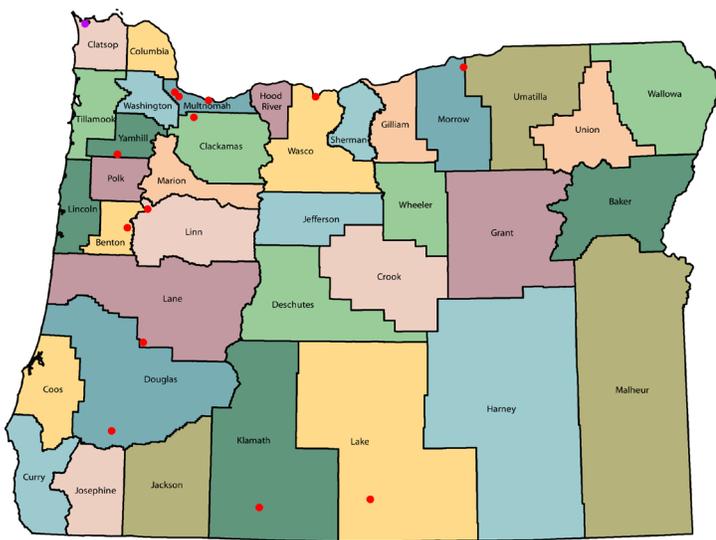
### About ATSDR

The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), based in Atlanta, Georgia along with 10 regional offices, is a federal public health agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. ATSDR serves the public by using the best science, taking responsive public health actions, and providing trusted health information to prevent harmful exposures and diseases related to toxic substances.

“You [EHAP staff] did a great job. I was very impressed by your professionalism and expertise, as well as your genuine concern for our community.” – Community Member

## Did You Know?

- At least 316 facilities are authorized to release metals under conditions specified in permits issued by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality.
- Since February 2016, health care providers in Oregon have been required to report “cadmium-positive urine results” to public health officials after high levels of cadmium were identified in neighborhoods near glass making facilities.
- Only 35% of Oregon’s over 13,000 brownfields have been assessed or cleaned up (Oregon Brownfield Coalition).



Site on Final National Priorities List (NPL)  
as of September 9, 2016

● On Final NPL

● Proposed for NPL

Data sources: Esri, U.S. EPA “Search Superfund Site Information” query (2016), U.S. EPA SEMS (2016), U.S. EPA Facility Registry Service (2016).



Health is more than what happens in your doctor’s office. Where you live may have a stronger influence than your genes when it comes to health. Our social context and environmental factors determine our health<sup>1</sup>. If essential supports beyond health care are missing in your neighborhood – like clean air and water, safe places to be active or play, etc. – you may become sick or get injured. By reducing and eliminating site-related exposures, EHAP works to improve the health and well-being of communities affected by Brownfield, Superfund, and other contaminated sites.

<sup>1</sup>Whitehead M, Dahlgren G. 1991. What can we do about inequalities in health? *The Lancet* 338:1059-1063.

## Learn more

**Follow these links to learn more about programs protecting public health in Oregon:**

ATSDR — <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/>

Division of Community Health Investigations (DCHI) — <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/hac/index.html>

ATSDR Public Health Assessments and Consultations for Oregon — <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/HAC/PHA/HCPHA.asp?State=OR>

Oregon Public Health Division — <http://public.health.oregon.gov/Pages/Home.aspx#>

Oregon Environmental Health Assessment Program — [www.healthoregon.org/ehap](http://www.healthoregon.org/ehap)

Oregon Brownfield Initiative — <http://public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyEnvironments/HealthyNeighborhoods/Brownfields/Pages/index.aspx>

Cleaner Air Oregon — <http://cleanerair.oregon.gov/>

*ATSDR – The most trusted Agency protecting American communities from environmental health threats through application of state of the art science.*

Last updated 10/01/2017