



Focus

Public Comment Solicited for Northwest Area Contingency Plan Changes



What is the Northwest Area Contingency Plan?

The Northwest Area Contingency Plan is the primary policy and guidance document for responding to spills of oil and hazardous substances to water and land. It covers three states: Idaho, Oregon and Washington; and the regional offices for three federal agencies: EPA Region 10, and the U.S. Coast Guard's Marine Safety Offices for Puget Sound and Portland. The plan promotes regional coordination and directs the actions of spill response participants. It identifies their roles and responsibilities and describes how response resources will be activated and managed.



The Northwest Area Contingency Plan was originally developed in 1993 and designed to be revised periodically. A committee representing the states and federal entities has recently drafted major revisions to the plan. The changes are primarily updates regarding how the document is structured. The agencies are now soliciting public comment regarding the proposed changes.

What has changed?

The area plan's format has been reorganized to make it easier to use. The new format is built around the five major functions of an Incident Command System: command, operations, planning, logistics and finance/administration.

Significant changes include:

- Recognizing the National Interagency Incident Management System model **Incident Command System (ICS)** to ensure that commonly understood organization, forms, process and terminology are used for plan review, exercises and incident responses.
- Adding a **West Coast Mutual Aid Policy** for accessing response resources from Alaska, British Columbia, California, Oregon, and Washington during major oil spills.
- Updating the **Responsible Party Policy** that clarifies spillers' responsibilities and encourages quick deployment of response equipment and personnel to an incident.
- Integrating the **Hazardous Substance Response Plan** throughout the Area Plan, along with specific information on hazardous substances.
- Proposing a **Regional Marine Fire Fighting Plan**, to be augmented with specific fire fighting manuals for the U.S. Coast Guard's Marine Safety Offices in Portland and Puget Sound.
- Revising the **In-Situ Burning Checklist and Worksheet** in the planning section
- Developing a set of simplified **Disposal Guidelines** for Washington state, including a boilerplate disposal plan.
- Adopting policy language placing trustee agencies, when available, as **Environmental Unit** lead.



How can I get a copy of the area plan?

The draft plan is available electronically from the Northwest Area Contingency Plan Steering Committee's website at: <http://www.webcom.com/~d13www/cgunits/mso/nwac.html>

Since the draft plan is approximately 500 pages, only a few printed copies will be available. For a printed copy, contact:

USCG Marine Safety Office Puget Sound (206) 217-6217
Attn: Lt. j.g. Connie Ruckstuhl
1519 Alaskan Way South, Bldg. 1
Seattle, WA 98134

How do I comment on the area plan revisions?

You may comment by mail to the address listed above, or by attending a public workshop. All comments must be made by Sept. 11, 1998. The final updated area plan should be completed and available by Nov. 18.

When and where will the public workshops be held?

Date and Time	Location
Tuesday, Sept. 1 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.	U.S. Coast Guard Marine Safety Office 6767 North Basin Avenue Portland, OR 97217
RSVP Lt. Lillian Maizer, U.S. Coast Guard, (503) 240-9325	
Wednesday, Sept. 2 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.	REI Building 222 Yale Avenue North Seattle, WA 98109
Thursday, Sept. 3 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.	Cavanaugh's Templins Resort 414 East First Avenue Post Falls, ID 83854

Who do I contact for more information?

You can get more information from any of the participating agencies.

Lt. Cmdr. Rob Loesch, U.S. Coast Guard, Seattle, at (206) 217-6214 (rloesch@pacnorwest.uscg.mil)
Mike Sibley, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, at (206) 553-1886 (sibley.michael@epamail.epa.gov)
Lt. Lillian Maizer, U.S. Coast Guard, Portland, at (503) 240-9325 (msopdx@cnnw.net)
Jack Wylie, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, at (503) 229-5716 (wylie.jack@deq.state.or.us)
Bill Bishop, Idaho Bureau of Hazardous Materials, at (208) 334-3263 (bbishop@bds.state.id.us)
John Butler, Washington Department of Ecology, at (360) 407-6970 (jbut461@ecy.wa.gov).

All participating agencies are sending this fact sheet to their respective mailing lists. If you receive a duplicate, please pass it along to someone who can use it.

Ecology is an equal opportunity agency. If you have special accommodation needs, contact John Butler at (360) 407-6970 (Voice) or (360) 407-6006 (TDD).