PHTHALATES RESEARCH FOR SOURCE CONTROL PHASE II

Analysis of and education about phthalates in external use products and alternatives in order to improve source control in the stormwater pathway that may recontaminate Commencement Bay and Duwamish Superfund sediment cleanup sites in Puget Sound. This project extends Phase I work (2019) to assess additional products and examine leachability into stormwater.

How we’re doing it
In Phase I, we analyzed 213 products for 9 phthalates. 46 products contained phthalates above laboratory detection limits (100 ppm).

In Phase II, after a brief research phase (looking into current business practices), we will determine a suite of products to test, including more products from Phase I categories, new categories and potential low-phthalate alternatives (i.e., products that could be substituted).

We will acquire products and prepare for analysis by cutting into tiny pieces (the size of coffee grounds).

Likely, we will do two rounds of product sampling, in order to take an iterative approach. Then, we will do leach testing to assess potential to impact stormwater.

We will conclude by communicating study results to decision makers, businesses, and agency staff.

Lower Duwamish Superfund Site

WHY THIS ISSUE IS IMPORTANT

Sediment cleanups in Puget Sound cost millions of dollars. Source control is critical to reduce the potential for recontamination of these sites. Phthalates, which are endocrine disrupting chemicals, have been identified as a major recontamination threat. This project will help reduce phthalates entering waterbodies via the stormwater pathway, thus reducing the potential for recontamination and decreasing the load of phthalates in aquatic organisms. To date, phthalates have been primarily been studied in indoor environments and not assessed in exterior use products which may contribute directly to stormwater.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

You can help increase awareness about this class of chemicals. Also, you can volunteer to help secure and prepare samples for testing.

ABOUT ZERO WASTE WASHINGTON

Zero Waste Washington works to drive policy change for a healthy and waste-free future. We do this in part through research projects like this one. As another example, in partnership with Purdue University, we tested compost for perfluorinated substances (PFAS).

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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