

Frequently Asked Questions

About the GP Mill Cleanup



More than a century of industrial activity at the Georgia-Pacific (GP) pulp and paper mill in Camas has led to potential contamination in soil, sediment, and groundwater in and around the mill site. Contamination may have occurred due to regular operations, spills, or leaks.

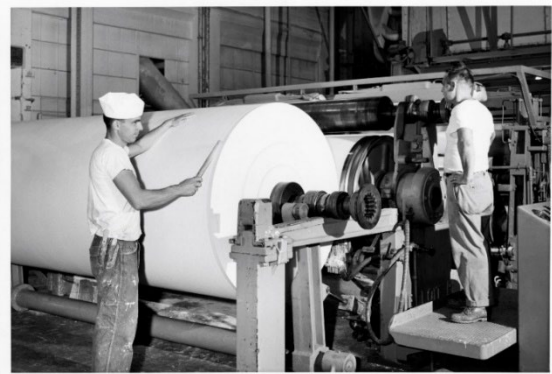
GP and Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) have entered an Agreed Order to assess areas around the mill site that are no longer in use,

while the mill continues to operate and employ people in our communities. Based on findings of this investigation, GP and Ecology may determine that interim actions are needed to clean up portions of the mill site.

About the mill

1. How long has the mill been around and why is it important?

The Columbia River Paper Company was started in 1884, and in 1885 began producing newsprint from local timber, straw, and rags, at the site that is now operated by GP. The mill started making paper from wood pulp in 1892 and was the first western mill to do this. It produced newsprint until 1930 when it stopped due to cheaper Canadian production. By removing newspaper manufacturing, Camas was able to become the largest specialty mill in the world. The mill is currently operated by GP, which continues to make paper from purchased pulp.



Camas Mill employees in 1940

The mill has been an active part of our community for over a century, and the site continues to be key for Camas and the region. Learn more about the mill and Camas's history at: www.downtowncamas.com/dca/history.

2. What's going on with the Georgia-Pacific Mill and why is it being cleaned up?

Operations at the mill continue on its main site. GP has not shared plans to stop current work at the mill.

In August 2021, Ecology and GP negotiated and consented to [an Agreed Order](#) for GP to investigate potential contamination and evaluate how to clean up areas around the mill site that are no longer in use. GP

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will pay for and conduct the investigation and/or cleanup activities in accordance with Washington State's Cleanup Law, the Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA).

3. Will operations at the mill be shutting down as a part of this process?

GP continues to operate a paper mill on the main site and has not shared plans to stop current operations. The mill is significant to the life and culture of our communities, and the Downtown Camas Association and the Community Advisory Group (CAG) respect its rich history and role as an economic driver for thousands of families.

4. How big is the mill?

The site occupies approximately 661 acres, consisting of 476 acres on Lady Island and 159 acres on the upland side, north of the Camas Slough. The site contains numerous structures that support mill operations.



The image above denotes the GP Camas Paper Mill property and clean up area. The mill property covered under the current Agreed Order is outlined in yellow; current mill operational areas are shaded in blue.

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About the Cleanup/Property

5. How long will the cleanup process take?

The cleanup process may take decades to complete. GP is currently investigating portions of the site that are not being used for current operations. Based on findings of this investigation, GP and Ecology may agree that interim actions are needed to clean up portions of the property. It's important to note that the investigation process can be iterative: multiple rounds of investigation may be required to define the nature and extent of contamination and to provide sufficient information to complete cleanup. Dates are approximate and subject to change based on Ecology's cleanup process, which is implemented according to the Washington State Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA).

Anticipated major project milestones include:

January 2022	GP provided a draft Remedial Investigation Work Plan (a plan that outlines a scope of work to investigate the property for potential environmental impacts and includes a plan for the collection of data in a variety of media to characterize site conditions, the types of waste, and containments, and evaluates risks to human health and the environment) to Ecology for review. Ecology also provided the draft Remedial Investigation Work Plan to the CAG for public review and comment.
March 2022	DCA submitted CAG comments and public comments on the draft Remedial Investigation Work Plan to Ecology.
Summer 2022	Ecology expected to provide final comments on the draft Remedial Investigation Work Plan to GP.
Late Summer 2022	GP expected to provide the final Remedial Investigation Work Plan to Ecology.
Fall/Winter 2022	GP expected to perform remedial investigation field work and prepare the Remedial Investigation Report.
Winter 2023	GP expected to provide the Remedial Investigation Report to Ecology for draft agency review.
Fall 2024	Ecology expected to provide GP with comments on draft agency review of Remedial Investigation Report.
Late 2024	Ecology expected to provide public review of Remedial Investigation Report.
Early 2025	If Ecology and GP determine through the remedial investigation process that interim action is warranted, they will start to work through the process to complete cleanup. This process includes a draft and final Interim Action Work Plan. The Agreed Order does not define the timelines for these documents or the start of any warranted interim actions.

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6. What is Ecology's role in the cleanup process?

Ecology will oversee and approve the work GP completes through the formal cleanup process to make sure that the activities are consistent with the Washington State Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA). Ecology also implements public outreach activities that are specified in MTCA, in addition to supporting engagement efforts made by the Downtown Camas Association.

Ecology has no role in establishing what the future use of the site will be. Decisions regarding zoning and future land use are established by the mill and the City of Camas (local planning authority). How the land will be used in the future is one factor in Ecology's determination of the required clean up levels. If future use other than industrial is established by the owner and the city, then Ecology will manage cleanup to levels based on that purpose.

7. What is Georgia Pacific's (GP's) role in the cleanup process?

GP entered an Agreed Order with Ecology to assess areas around the mill site that are no longer in use, while the mill continues to operate and employ people in our communities. The Agreed Order requires GP to conduct a remedial investigation where there has been a release or threatened release of hazardous substances and perform interim actions, as needed. The Agreed Order also requires that GP be present at meetings and available to answer the public's questions at the request of Ecology.

GP will be expected to perform remedial investigation field work, prepare the Remedial Investigation Report, and prepare a draft and final Interim Action Work Plan for any interim action performed.

8. What are the contaminants that should be cleaned up?

The mill will be required to address areas where chemicals pose an unacceptable risk to humans and/or ecological organisms through cleanup or other controls. Based on historical land use and industrial practices at the site, soil, groundwater, and/or sediment could be contaminated with total petroleum hydrocarbons from diesel, gasoline, and oil. Other contaminants may include:

- Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and carcinogenic PAHs.
- Benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, and xylenes.
- Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs).
- Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)
- Metals (lead and chromium).
- Dioxins and furans.
- Trichloroethylene (TCE) and tetrachloroethylene (PCE).

9. Are there any existing health risks that I should be aware of?

The planned remedial investigations will help understand what chemicals are present and how they could affect human health and the environment. There are state and national tools you can use to learn more about environmental health in your community.



- Washington Health Tracker: <https://doh.wa.gov/data-statistical-reports/washington-tracking-network-wtn/information-location>

10. What is happening with the Camas Business Center?

Also owned by GP and included in the Site definition in the Agreed Order is a parcel north of the main mill site. This property is called the [Camas Business Center \(CBC\)](#). GP historically used this site for research activities and manufacturing chemicals for the paper-making process. The DCA and CAG are not aware of GP's plans for this property. Additional assessment activities are included in the remedial investigation, as this property has been used in mill operations in the past.

11. What will happen with the mill property in the future? Are there redevelopment plans that are being considered?

There are no known redevelopment plans for the mill property. GP continues to operate a paper mill on the main site and has not shared plans to stop current operations.

Unrelated to the mill cleanup process, the City of Camas is launching Phase 2 of the North Shore Subarea plan, which includes recommendations for new zoning and comprehensive plan designations and new design and zoning standards to guide the development in the North Shore. Learn more at:

www.cityofcamas.us/com-dev/page/city-camas-launches-phase-2-north-shore-subarea-plan. This process may provide insight to possible future land uses and will inform cleanup approaches.

12. Is the GP Camas Mill considered a Superfund site?

No, the GP Camas Mill is not a Superfund site.

[Superfund](#) sites are [polluted](#) locations in the United States requiring a long-term response to clean up [hazardous material](#). Superfund cleanups are overseen by [United States Environmental Protection Agency](#) (EPA). They were designated under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) of 1980. CERCLA authorized EPA to create a list of such locations, which are placed on the [National Priorities List](#) (NPL). The Agreed Order for the GP mill is with the Washington State Department of Ecology and not the EPA.

Community Involvement

13. What is the Community Advisory Group (CAG) and what is its role in the cleanup process?

Ecology implements public outreach activities that are specified in MTCA. The Downtown Camas Association's CAG works to enhance these activities and spread the word about opportunities for community involvement.



As a part of the public participation process, the DCA has convened a CAG to get the community involved early in the cleanup process that GP will implement over the coming years.

The CAG was established in December 2021 and consists of [14 members](#). CAG meetings will occur every other month until June 2023 and are open for the public to observe. Meeting dates and links can be found on the [DCA website](#).

The CAG's role is to:

- Supervise the DCA's public involvement in consultant's work
- Provide recommendations on community outreach strategies
- Encourage opportunities for public involvement in the cleanup process
- Review technical materials and respond to Ecology and GP regarding the sampling and cleanup planning process, findings, and resulting plans.

14. How can I get involved and/or ask questions?

DCA's goal is to provide the public with regular opportunities to learn about investigation and cleanup and have input on this process to better inform Ecology of the community's desired outcome for the site.

There are many different opportunities to engage with and participate in the cleanup process. Members of the public will be able to attend public meetings and events, receive email notifications, and visit the regularly updated project website.

The DCA's website, www.downtowncamas.com/CamasWaMillInfo, is your go-to place for information related to this process and where you can [sign up for regular email updates](#). Visit the site and watch [DCA's Facebook account](#) for updates and event announcements.

We welcome your feedback on the GP cleanup process. Send your comments and questions to:

- Email: camaswamillinfo@downtowncamas.com
- Phone: 360-904-0218
- Website: www.downtowncamas.com/camaswamillinfo