



# Lower Duwamish Waterway Site Seattle, Washington



September 2002

## Hispanic Community Involvement Supplement

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) recognize the need to communicate with all sectors of the Lower Duwamish Waterway Site community to provide meaningful information and opportunities for genuine public participation. This document supplements the Lower Duwamish Waterway Site Community Involvement Plan.

The Lower Duwamish Waterway community includes at least 21 races. According to the 2000 census data, South Park and Georgetown neighborhoods located close to the Lower Duwamish Waterway have a combined Hispanic population of 32 percent. The objective of this document is to provide information about the Hispanic sector of the Duwamish community and suggest the most suitable way to satisfy its information needs and include the group in the decision-making process of Ecology and EPA. In the future, EPA and Ecology will also assess the need to provide special services to more groups.

EPA has conducted interviews, participated in focus groups, and attended the South Park Neighborhood Association's first meeting organized for the Hispanic community. At those meetings, EPA described the Duwamish Waterway as a Superfund site, contaminants of concern, location of the site, and future opportunities for public participation. Members of the community shared a wealth of information about their local issues and preferred methods of communication.

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## **Demographic profile**

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the population of the Duwamish community is 42,700. The Public Health Division of Seattle and King County selected nine small statistical subdivisions of the City of Seattle to define the Lower Duwamish Waterway community. Those nine subdivisions fall within the following neighborhoods: Parkland, Lower Beacon Hill, Lower White Center, Georgetown and South Park.

Seattle's Hispanic community has grown rapidly as farm mechanization eliminated many farming jobs and people moved from farm regions to Puget Sound cities. Approximately 10.6 percent of the Lower Duwamish Waterway population is Hispanic, with the majority being Mexican or of Mexican descent.

### ***South Park/Georgetown***

South Park and Georgetown neighborhoods are close to the Lower Duwamish Waterway and have the highest Hispanic population in the area. According to census data evaluated by Seattle and King County Public Health (May, 2001), South Park and Georgetown have a combined population of about 4,900 people, 32 percent of which is Hispanic.

While 12.3 percent of the households in South Park and Georgetown speak Spanish at home, only 3.2 percent speak only Spanish. Twenty-four percent generate annual incomes below the federal poverty level, 35.1 percent of the population is under 17 years of age, and 39.1 percent of the households have a single parent as the head of the household.

	<b>Total Population</b>	<b>Percent Hispanics</b>
Duwamish Area	42,700	10.6%
Georgetown/South Park	4,900	32%

## **Other Population Groups**

The Lower Duwamish Waterway community includes at least 21 races. Some 8.8 percent of the households in South Park and Georgetown are linguistically isolated; 63.6 percent of those households speak Tagalog, Chinese, Mon-Khmer, Japanese or Vietnamese, among other languages. EPA and Ecology also will assess the need to provide special services to these groups.

## **Interviews**

EPA, Ecology, and the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) interviewed five professionals and educated members of the Hispanic community to identify representative concerns and suggestions for sharing information with the community. People were interviewed individually, in person, or by telephone.

### **Issues of concern raised during Interviews**

- **Lack of information:** Interviewees felt that the community lacks information. One individual did not know the site was contaminated until contacted by EPA for an interview. All agree that the Hispanic community near the Duwamish has not been given information about the contamination and that the community is unaware of the work EPA and Ecology are doing. Some participants mentioned the lack of posters or public notice posters or signs near the water to inform the community that the water is not safe.
- **Unknown risks:** Those interviewed expressed concern that human health might be at risk by drinking water. One person asked if the water from the Lower Duwamish Waterway is a supply of drinking water for the City of Seattle.

- **Wildlife:** A concern was expressed for marine animals, eagles and other birds, and salmon.
- **Businesses along the waterway:** Three interviewees consider it important that businesses not be shut down because of the loss of jobs in the area; they suggested that businesses be included in the cleanup process. One person wanted reassurance that polluting companies are participating in the cleanup and will be taught how to operate without contaminating the environment.
- **Job Creation:** One person mentioned the need to consider creation of new jobs during the cleanup.
- **Suggested Communication Methods:**
  - Two people mentioned that e-mail is the best way to communicate with them.
  - Three people would like to receive monthly or quarterly updates.
  - All interviewees would like public meetings to be held at restaurants, schools and other familiar public spaces.
  - Spanish-speaking radio is a very effective avenue in communicating with the Hispanic community because some members do not read English or Spanish.
  - One person pointed out that our first fact sheet, translated from English, was ineffective because it was too complicated. Interviewees suggest that we make fact sheets visually stimulating, with colors, graphics and simplified text.
  - Interviewees asked us to place maps of the site at schools, community colleges, churches and other public spaces.

– One-on-one conversations, presentations, and booths at local events were suggested as highly effective.

– Print media was suggested as a good source of information for the more educated sector of the community; if used, print media always should include health-related information to generate interest.

### Focus Groups

With the help of Sea Mar Clinic, members of the Hispanic community were invited to talk with the Seattle-King County Department of Health and EPA about the Lower Duwamish River community health and safety issues. The Sea Mar Clinic is a community health center dedicated to the care of the medically under-served Hispanic population of Seattle. Seventeen members of the community participated (nine women and eight men) in two focus group sessions. Six of the women were mothers. Almost all participants were born in Mexico except for one woman who was Ecuadorian. All participants spoke Spanish as their primary language. Conversations were facilitated and interpreted by Sea Mar staff.

### Issues of Concern Raised in Focus Group Sessions

- **Housing:** Almost all participants expressed frustration in finding affordable, clean and safe housing. Their biggest concerns are pest control (rats and cockroaches), irregular or poor maintenance of their apartments, and lack of personal safety.
- **Solid waste:** Litter in streets and slow-degrading materials are not regularly picked up, causing a health concern, as well as concern about negative aesthetic impacts such as a dirty appearance and bad smells.

❁ **Industrial Waste:** This was mentioned by one participant, who demonstrated indignation and a sense of injustice resulting from a perception that the government and community as a whole allow companies to get away with polluting.

❁ **Uses of the River:**

– None of the respondents indicated that they swim, fish or eat fish from the Duwamish River; however, during a health fair at Concord Elementary School in which the EPA participated, a mother of three mentioned to an EPA representative that she has taken her children tubing down the Duwamish River twice.

– Half of the focus group participants have gone near the water for passive recreation (to feed the ducks, picnic and walk along the edge of the river) and during these events they have seen other people (possibly Asian/Pacific islanders or Native Americans) fishing.

### **Meeting with South Park Neighborhood Association**

On September 20, 2001, EPA and DOH attended the first meeting organized for the Hispanic residents of South Park. The neighborhood association is making efforts to break some of the language barriers that prevent all residents from participating at their meetings. To this end, a subgroup was organized to discuss issues in Spanish. This subgroup will have a spokesperson representing them to the larger neighborhood association group.

### **Issues of Concern Raised by Members of the South Park Neighborhood Association**

❁ **Lack of information:** All participants were surprised to hear for the first time that the Duwamish Waterway is contaminated and that it has been under investigation for more than a year. Many questions were raised about EPA and Ecology plans for cleanup, including the costs associated with the cleanup.

❁ **Indignation and a sense of injustice:** This resulted from a perception that local officials have known about the contamination and not taken the necessary steps to warn the residents about existing contamination. None of the participants have seen posted warning signs asking people not to swim, fish or drink the water. The group would like to see advisories posting any threats near the water, and they would like to be involved in the location selection for any notice.

❁ **Children and youth:** The community is having a hard time finding positive things for children to do in their spare time. They do not have a library and a lot of businesses on 14th Street sell tobacco and liquor. Illegal drug deals and prostitution are a constant problem for this community. One member was concerned that the few recreational areas, the parks and beaches along the river, will now be a health risk to young people who gather there.

❁ **Best place to meet:** A Community Center within the South Park neighborhood was suggested because it is a central location for residents from both sides of the bridge on 8th Avenue, which apparently serves as a reminder of the divisions between two sectors of South Park.

### • Best way to reach them:

- The neighborhood association has a newsletter to which the EPA was invited to contribute with monthly updates.
- E-mails are the best way to share information with the leaders of the association.
- To communicate with the community at large, radio public service announcements were suggested as a highly effective means to get messages to this segment of the community. One of the leaders of the neighborhood association suggested that it would be best to meet with the host of a radio show, to engage the community in the issue, and to have the host talk about the cleanup project. One participant used this technique to advertise events organized by Sea Mar Clinics and found the events to be well attended.

### **Information Needs**

How to deal with "slum lords," safety concerns and pest control.

Respondents overwhelmingly expressed interest in, and a need for, more information on pest control, proper handling of household wastes, and addressing problems with irregular or no maintenance of rental properties. Even homeowners need the information for themselves as they acknowledge the severity of this issue and know of people who deal with these issues first hand.

## **Outreach Strategy**

### **Education Prior to Public Input**

Outreach activities should focus on building environmental awareness by providing information of interest to the public (*e.g.*, handling household hazards or pesticides) in order to build a relationship and later encourage public participation. EPA and Ecology will try to develop partnerships with the Seattle-King County Health Department to provide the information most needed by the community and at the same time educate them about the Lower Duwamish Waterway Superfund site. The first step is to get the community engaged.

### ***Involvement at Different Stages of the Superfund Process***

At different stages of the Superfund Process, EPA and Ecology are required to conduct specific outreach activities as outlined in the Lower Duwamish Waterway Site Community Involvement Plan. At this time, the project team is working on a Remedial Investigation. During this critical phase of the Superfund process, the site team is gathering information to learn about contamination at the site. In the fall of 2002, EPA and Ecology expect to have identified risks and priority areas for cleanup. As the information becomes available, informal outreach will be conducted. Public meetings can be organized to share this information and prepare the community for a comment period on the Proposed Plan that will be published after the Remedial Investigation is completed. Some of the informal activities that can be conducted before the Proposed Plan is ready include:

**Fact Sheets and Other Mailers:** EPA and Ecology will prepare occasional mailers to update interested members of the community about cleanup activities. Please contact Cindy Colgate Schuster at (206) 553-1815 or [schuster.cindy@epa.gov](mailto:schuster.cindy@epa.gov) if you would like to have your address added to or deleted from the English- or Spanish-language mailing list for the site.

**Publication Design:**

Fact sheets and other outreach materials created in English may be translated and altered to meet the following criteria:

- simpler language and format
- strong headings (short, active voice, capture the essence, solicit reaction)
- bullets or lists
- question and answer formats
- attractive and stimulating with multiple colors.

**Spanish/English:** It is important to point out that not everyone in a Hispanic household with a Spanish-dominant household head is necessarily Spanish-language dominant; often the children are English-dominant. Therefore, bilingual information is most effective.

**Face-to-face Communication with the Community**

- by attending meetings that are already planned (as a guest speaker);
- holding a community meeting co-sponsored by an existing organization or community leader such as schools, religious groups, grassroots organizations and clinics;
- co-sponsoring educational activities with the Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition (Community Advisory Group) and South Park Neighborhood Association.

**Potential Partners****El Centro de la Raza**

2524 16th Avenue South  
Seattle, Washington 98144  
(206) 329-7960

This is a civil rights organization which operates a grass-roots multiple-service agency. El Centro de la Raza serves a special role in Seattle as a moral and cultural center for Seattle's large Hispanic community, which is widely dispersed throughout Seattle rather than being concentrated in a barrio as is found in most other cities.

El Centro's International Relations Department and Community Outreach raises money through the sale of arts and crafts items from all of the Americas and also builds people-to-people relations through tours, speakers and workshops. Community University is offered free to people and focuses on the teachings of Martin Luther King.

**Sea Mar Clinic**

This medical organization has several facilities within the Lower Duwamish project area. They operate on a sliding scale and have bilingual personnel. Services include a daycare center for children, primary medical treatment, family counseling and a senior center.

**Concord Elementary School**

At the school, students and the Parents Teachers Association can be given different information adapted to their level of education.

**Grupo de Apoyo Para Madres Latinas**

The Latino Mothers Support Group focuses on educational and social events. The group is sponsored by the Southwest Family Center and Concord Elementary School. They meet Wednesdays from 6:00 to 7:30 PM at Concord Elementary School and during the summer at Sea Mar facilities. The contact person is Jose Martinez, (206) 937-7680.

### **South Park Community Center**

8319-8th Avenue South  
Seattle, Washington 98108  
(206) 684-7451

The center offers cultural education, athletic programs, a career center and computer lab, and free child care. Annual events include the South Park Festival, Big Deal Day, Halloween Carnival and Haunted House, Festival of Lights and Day of the Dead Celebration.

### **Holy Family Church**

9622-20th Avenue SW  
Seattle, Washington 98106  
(206) 767-6220

Spanish Mass Schedule: Saturday at 6:30 PM,  
Sunday at 9:30 AM and 12:30 PM,  
Wednesday at 7 PM.

Venus Velázquez  
(206)725-9810

Sends out newsletter with events.

### **Concilio for the Spanish Speaking**

115 N 85th Street, Suite 200  
Seattle, Washington 98103  
(206) 706-7776  
[Concilio@nwlinc.com](mailto:Concilio@nwlinc.com)

This group organizes the Latino Achievement Education Project, which is committed to improving bilingual education in the state of Washington. They conduct a fund raiser during Fiestas Patrias Celebration (September 16) at the Seattle Center, and publish *La Voz*, a monthly newsletter.

### **Use of Media**

EPA and Ecology may use bilingual radio and newspapers to advertise the opening of comment periods and availability of new fact sheets.

### **Announcing Comment Periods on the Radio**

Radio is the most effective way to solicit public participation from this community. EPA and Ecology may send a short version (200 words maximum) of the fact sheet announcing the opening of comment periods in the form of a press release/public service announcement request to radio station KXPA-AM 1540.

Five of the people interviewed said the show *Radio Variedades*, hosted by Mercedes Garcia, is entertaining. This show airs from 12:00 to 2:45 PM daily and has a wide audience that listens during lunch break.

#### **KXPA-AM (1540)**

114 Lakeside Ave.

Seattle, Washington 98122

Affiliate of Hispanic National Radio Network

Contact Person: Greg Magdonald

(206) 292-7800

Fax: (206) 292-2140

60-second spot time rates cost \$40.00

30-second rate is 70% of a 60 second spot

suggested time: 9AM-3PM

### **Distributing Fact Sheets in Local Newspapers**

EPA and Ecology may send fact sheets by e-mail and facsimile, both in English and Spanish, to newspapers at least one week prior to the desired date of publication. Fact sheets should be condensed to 200 words or less. EPA and Ecology also may buy advertisements or insert fact sheets in newspapers distributed in Parkland, Georgetown, Lower Beacon Hill, Lower White Center and South Park neighborhoods.

## ***El Mundo***

Statewide, 17,000 copies of the *El Mundo* are distributed every Thursday. This bilingual publication focuses on news from Latin America, the United States and Washington State.

Cost of advertisement:

5.83" x 10" = \$323

5.83" x 5" = \$161

5.83" x 2.5" = \$82

5,000 inserts or less = \$180

Inserts must be provided by EPA and Ecology. Any size up to 10" x 11", single or double-sided, and printed on 24-pound paper (thicker than common paper).

El Mundo Communications, Inc.  
13635 NE 8th Street #104  
Bellevue, Washington 98005  
Carlos and Beatriz Rossetti  
[elmundo3accessone.com](http://elmundo3accessone.com)

## ***Siete Días***

On the western side of Washington, from Everett to Tacoma, 5,000 copies of *Siete Días* are distributed every Wednesday. This bilingual newspaper focuses on advertising local businesses, with less attention to current news and information.

Cost of advertisement:

5.83" x 10" = \$270

5.83" x 5" = \$200

5.83" x 2.5" = \$80

Business card = \$40

5,000 inserts or less = \$200

*Siete Días*  
12005 NE 12th Street #26  
Bellevue, Washington 98005  
Raul Peres Calleja  
[raul@sietediasinc.com](mailto:raul@sietediasinc.com)

## ***Conclusion***

EPA, Ecology and collaborating agencies need to encourage public participation from the Hispanic community in the Lower Duwamish Waterway community. In order to conduct successful outreach, efforts should take into account linguistic isolation and socioeconomic disadvantage. The first steps to promoting participation are to increase awareness about the cleanup project and to educate the community about environmental issues in general. Creating and nurturing working relationships with leaders of the Hispanic community in the area as well as the use of bilingual publications to disseminate information will increase the chances of public participation.

### ***For More Information:***

If you have any questions about the Hispanic Community Outreach Plan, please contact Lilibeth Serrano at 1-800-424-4372 extension 1388 (Voice) or by e-mail at [Serrano-Velez.Lilibeth@epa.gov](mailto:Serrano-Velez.Lilibeth@epa.gov).

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