Port of Tacoma Spill Response Program Overview

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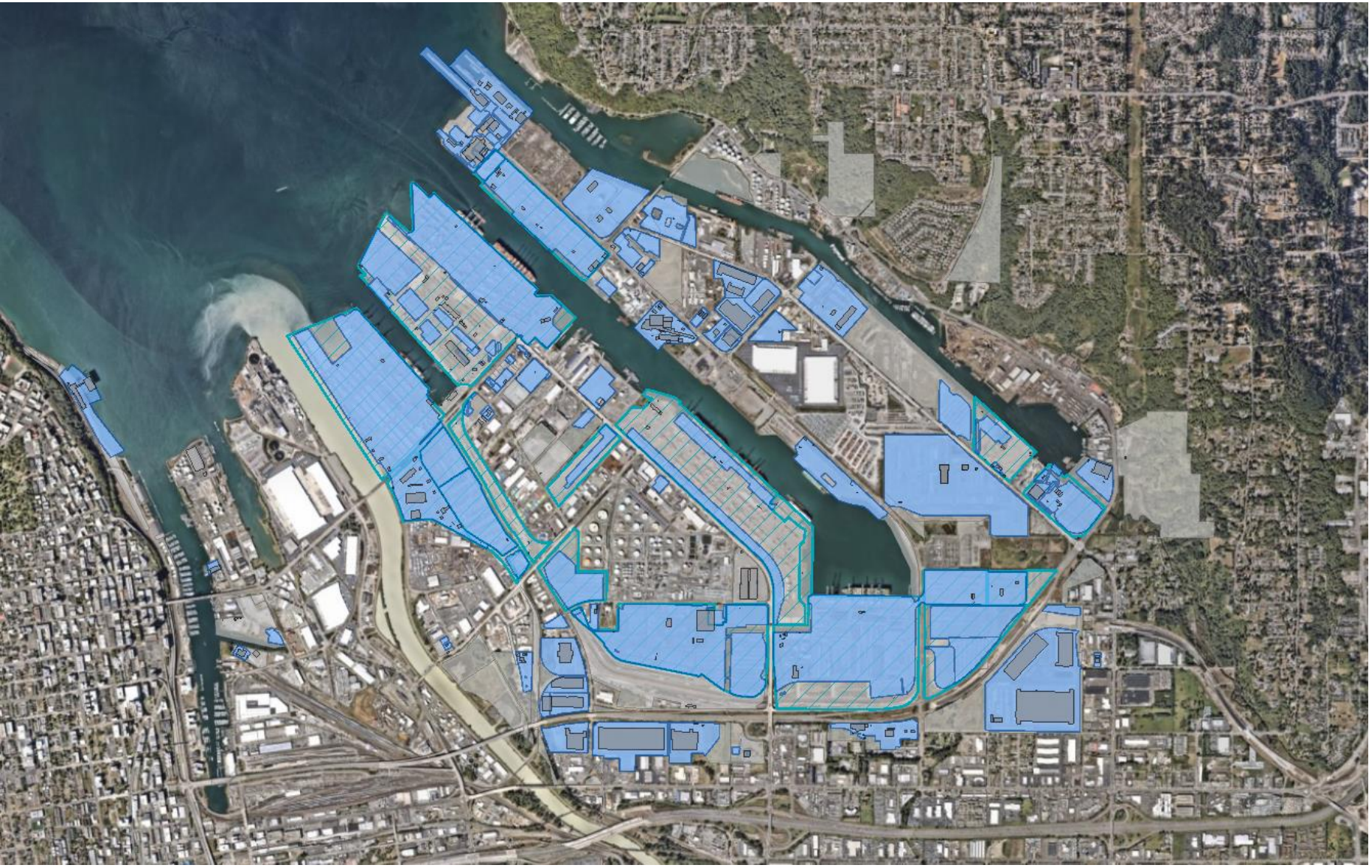
NEBC Remediation Conference

Date: April 2, 2025

Port of Tacoma

People. Partnership. Performance.

Program Overview



- ~2600 acres of Port property
- 1195 acres under ISGP
- 1870 acres with SW treatment
- 3 - 14 spills per year

Spill Prevention and Response

Port of Tacoma

Protect storm system, prevent discharge to waterways. Shut off leaking equipment – Do not move. Use materials provided in spill kits

Notify Port Security with material type and quantity at (253)383-9472. Port Security will make necessary notifications to all regulatory agencies and Port staff. Do not notify State and/or Federal agencies unless requested to do so.

For water-based and diving and salvage work, contact: Global Diving and Salvage, Inc. (800)441-3483

For land-based work contact: Clean Harbors Environmental (800)645-8265

Evaluate the Situation → Contain and Cleanup Spills Immediately → Gather Information for Notifications → Notify Port Security → Port of Tacoma Qualified Spill Responders → Spill Response Contractors

Is it safe to cleanup the spill? If not properly trained to address the spill, utilize a spill response contractor. Locate PPE and spill kit for materials.

All spills must be reported to Port of Tacoma Security to start Emergency Response Actions pursuant to the Phase I Permit and Port Policy. Be sure to note if spill has entered or is a threat to enter the stormwater system or waterway.

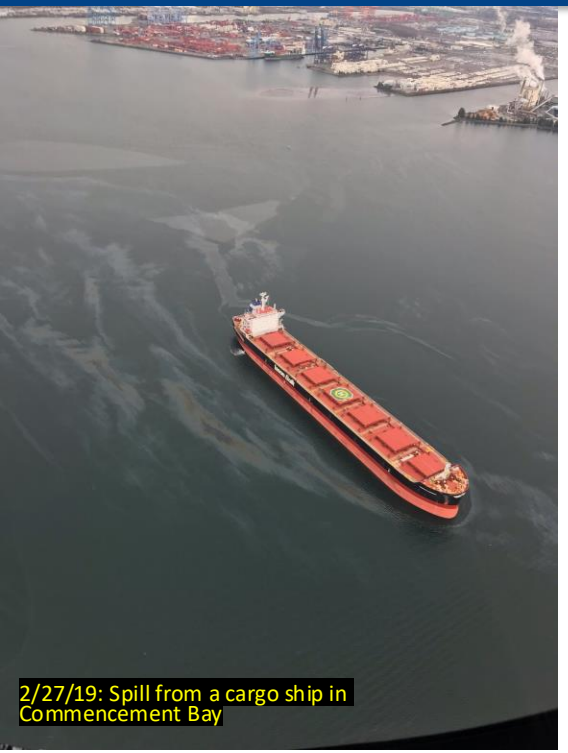
Water Quality Analyst: Ben Nield (253)241-0297
Qualified Maintenance Spill Responders: Steve Bowles (253)365-0809, Scott Hopson (253)219-0821

Training

Port maintenance, security and operations staff are trained annually.

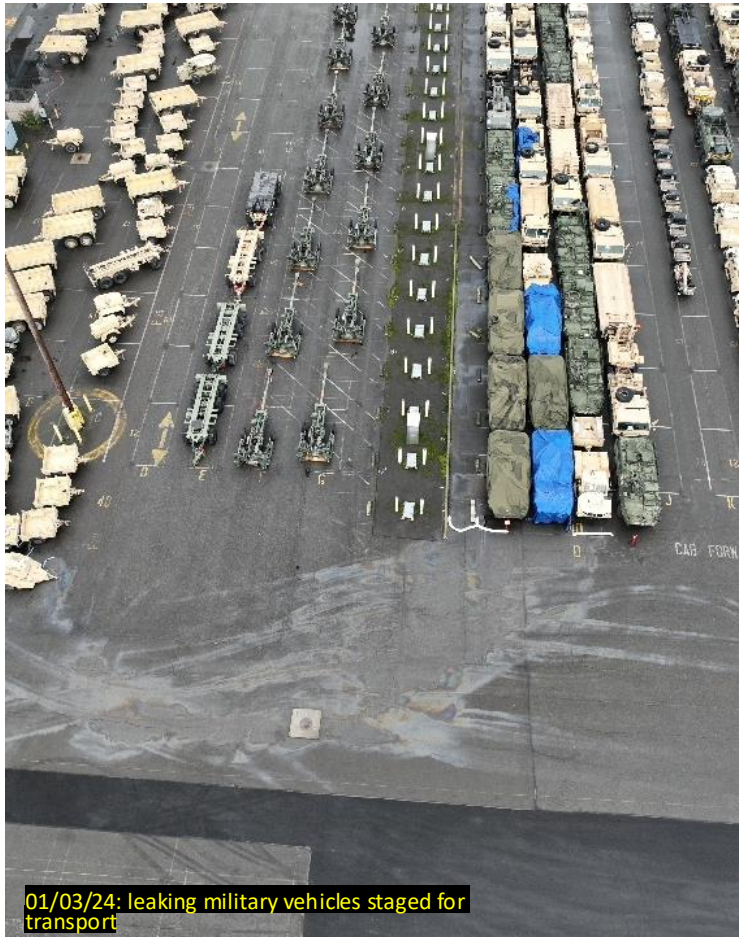
New employees within 90 days of hire.

The gambit of spills



2/27/19: Spill from a cargo ship in Commencement Bay

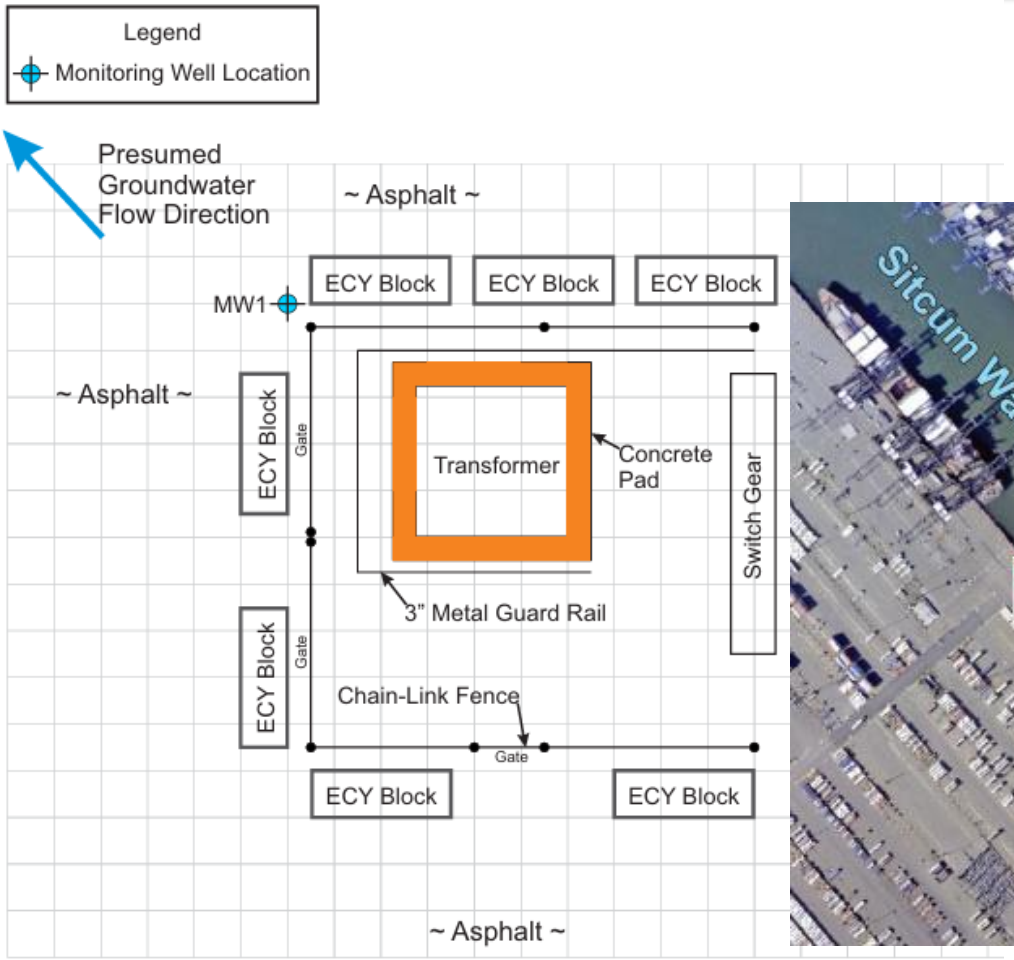
12/14/23: Tenant Equipment Spills



01/03/24: leaking military vehicles staged for transport

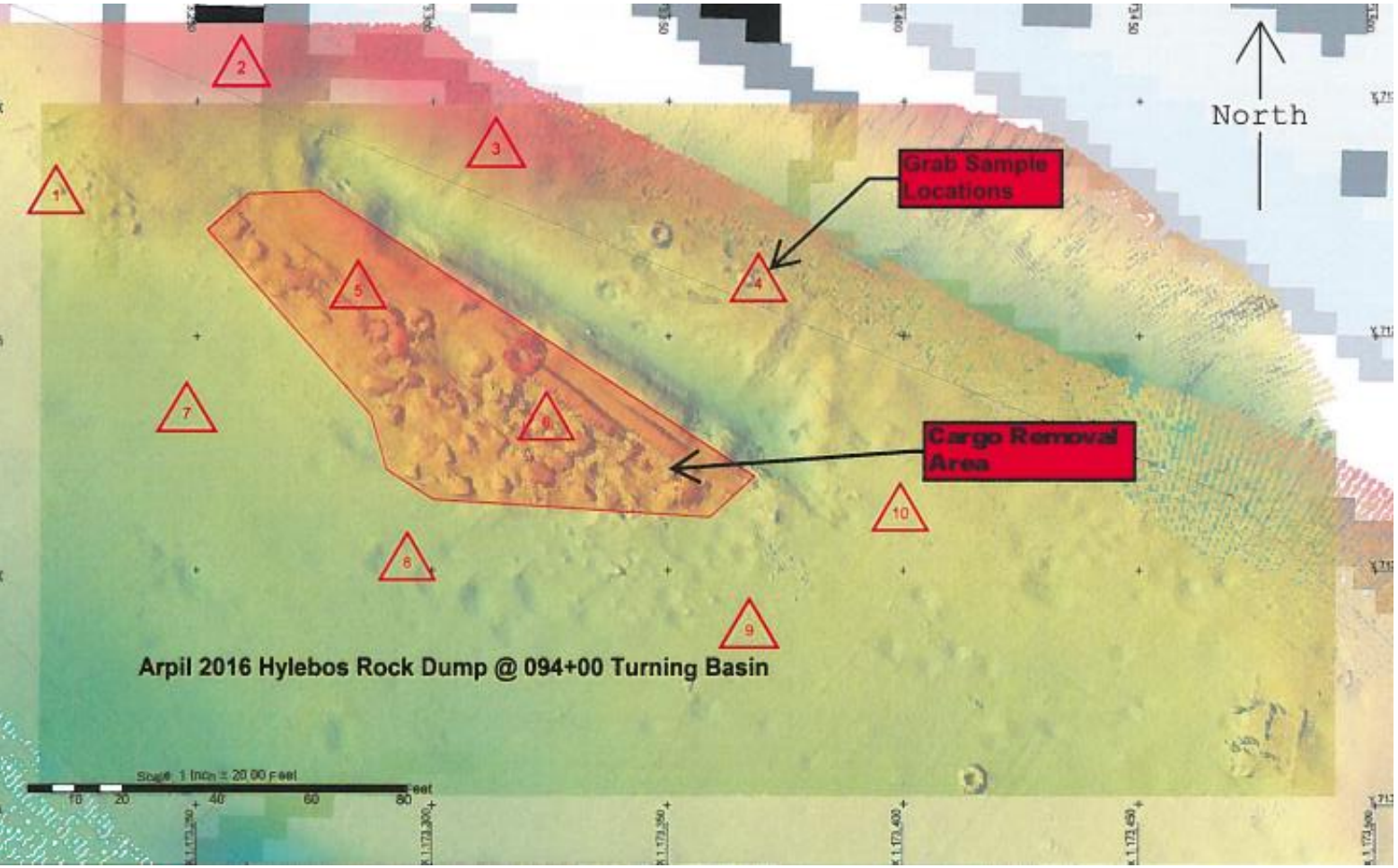
9/27/24: Used Motor Oil Dumped on side of road

Case Study 1 – Transformer Spill



- Dec 2014 - 143 gallon transformer spill
- 22.56 Tons of soil impacted, mineral oil
- PCBs <1 ppm
- TPU lead site
- NFA – Dec 2018

Case Study 2 – Rock Barge Spill

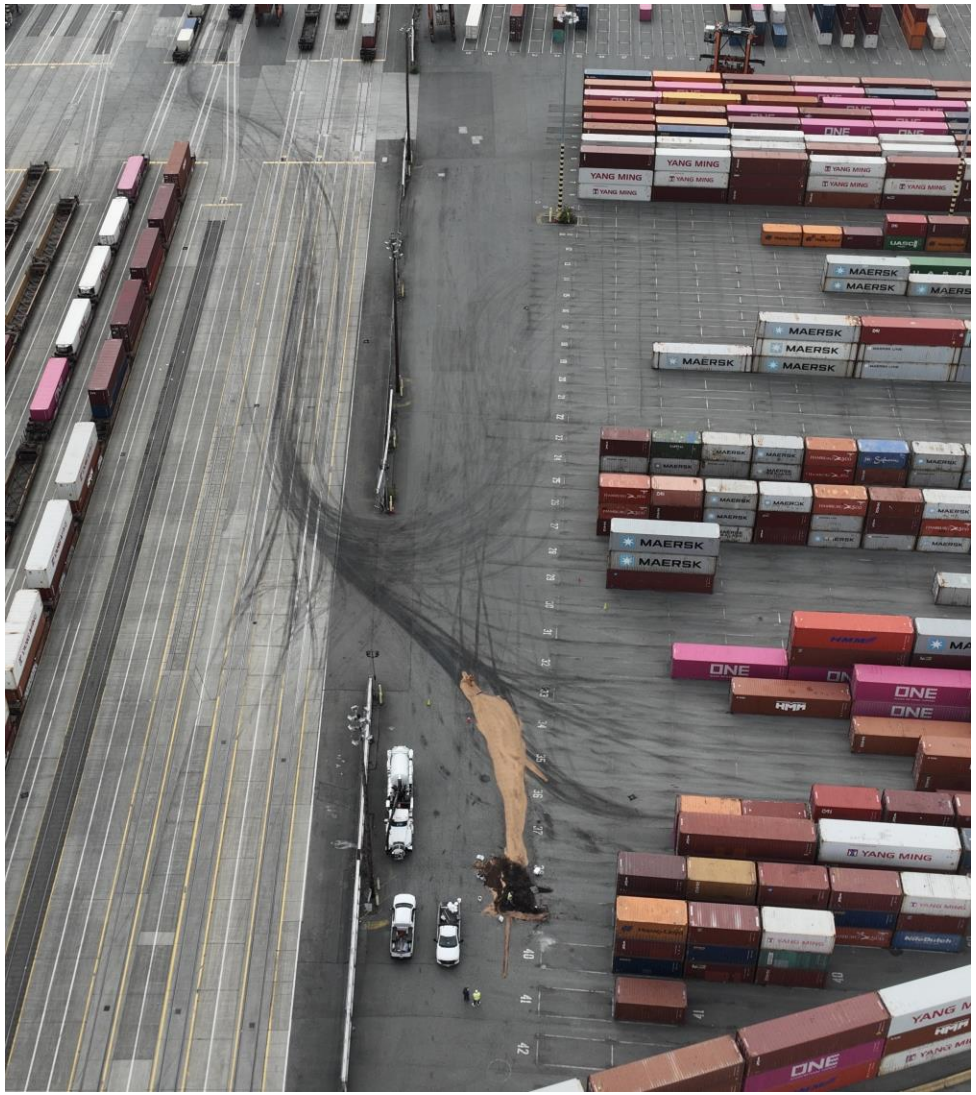


- November 4, 2015 barge sinks with 200 tons of rock
- Pilots reduce maximum vessel draft
- USACE – requires removal of Hazard to Navigation
- July 2016 – Rocks removed. Pilots lift navigation restriction

Case Study 3 – Bioswale Hit and Run

- 04/19/2023
- Could not identify source, assume it was a bad actor in trucking community
- Had to remediate and rebuild the bioswale
- Worked with Ecology

Case Study 4 – Husky Terminal



- Date Aug 7, 2024
- Failed hydraulic hose on straddle carrier
- Wasn't noticed immediately and was tracked into railyard
- Security not engaged early on
- Used drone to analyze extent of spill during response

Challenges and Lessons Learned

- See something, say something
- Do the cleanup and collect the appropriate confirmation samples
- Engage the appropriate stakeholders
- Don’t rely on Institutional Knowledge
- Don’t forget about Insurance

Future Plans and Improvements

On April 8, 2023, the fishing vessel Kodiak Enterprise experienced a fire on the Hylebos Waterway in Tacoma, Washington. Image credit: Washington Department of Ecology.

- June 26, 2024 - Port of Tacoma hosts tabletop exercise simulating a large-scale emergency response
- Evaluating new free hydraulic oil (Spectra: Zinc free formulated for port heavy industrial equipment)
- Drone tech – waterproof, thermal, docking

Thank You

Questions & Discussion

Port of Tacoma

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