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DEQ orders urgent soil removal at homes near Eugene plant

By: Chelsea Hunt
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Michael Sevren

EUGENE, Ore. – Several residential properties near the J.H. Baxter & Co. plant in west Eugene urgently need contaminated soil to be removed, the Department of Environmental Quality announced on Thursday.

Yard soil samples were collected last fall as part of an ongoing investigation into dioxin contamination near the facility south of Roosevelt Boulevard. Depending on the level of exposure, DEQ officials said dioxins can increase the risk of cancer and other health effects.

Of the seven properties that were tested, three need cleanup as soon as possible, another three need cleanup to reduce long-term health risks, and one property does not require cleanup, according to the DEQ report.

Residents were informed of the findings and advised on the next steps.

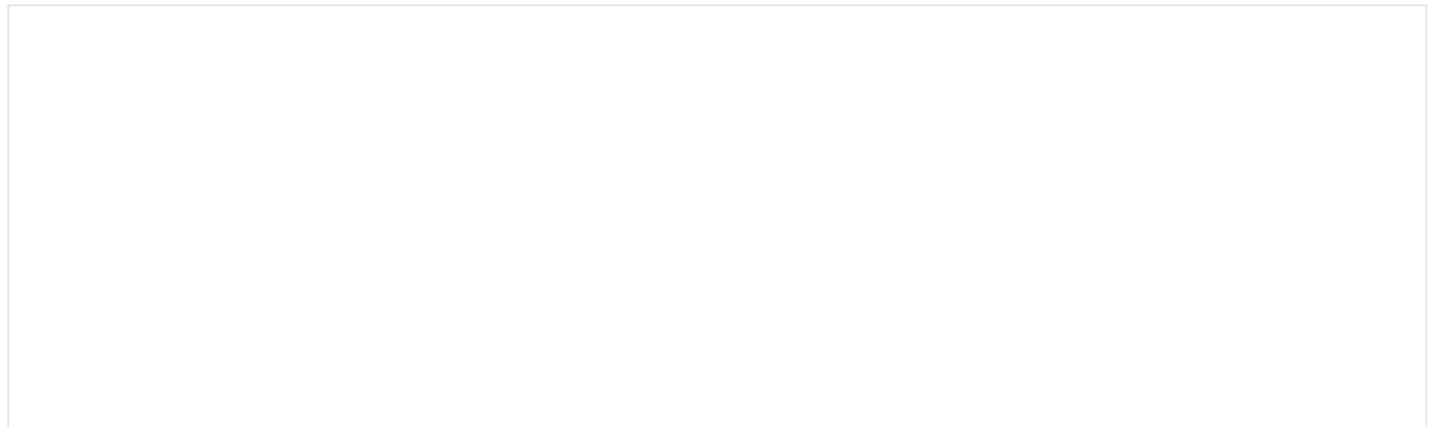
A second phase of soil sampling is expected to take place soon that will help determine the extent of the contamination around the initial seven properties.

Soil samples were collected from other sites away from the facility to provide background data, and elevated levels of dioxins were found at Trainsong Park in west Eugene. DEQ officials said they're not sure what the source of the contamination is there, but it doesn't appear to be related to the plant. Officials are working to determine the next steps.

According to the Oregon Health Authority, a family with young children would have to visit the park four days a week for an entire year before there would be any risk of health effects. Children under the age of 3 would be at greatest risk.

The Baxter plant has been under investigation since 2020 due to elevated levels of toxic chemical compounds. For more information, [CLICK HERE](#).

MORE INFORMATION





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