

# LRAPA seeks new permit for embattled Baxter facility in Bethel area

KLCC | By **Brian Bull**

Published May 8, 2023 at 6:02 AM PDT



LISTEN • 1:02



Brian Bull / KLCC

The J.H. Baxter sign and entrance at the now-closed wood treatment facility on Roosevelt Blvd, Eugene.

The company behind a shuttered – yet still controversial - wood treatment facility in West Eugene could soon get a new air permit for it.

J.H. Baxter ran the facility in the Bethel Neighborhood for 80 years, before closing it in January of 2022. By the time it ended operations, two lawsuits were filed against Baxter for alleged environmental and health problems stemming from the site. And high levels of dioxins have also been found in local soil.

KLCC  
1A

Travis Knudsen of the Lane Regional Air Protection Agency (LRAPA) told KLCC that Baxter needs a new air permit to replace one that expires in June, as the facility no longer does wood processing.

“There still are air emissions coming from J.H. Baxter that relate to the evaporator and a boiler that provides steam to the evaporator,” explained Knudsen. “And all the evaporator is evaporating is essentially rainwater that falls into containment areas on site of Baxter.”

A neighborhood group says it appreciates the heads-up on J.H. Baxter’s possible shift to a different air permit.

Tai Pruce-Zimmerman of Active Bethel Citizens said LRAPA has explained the change to locals.

“And they were pretty emphatic that this is not in any way something that creates a threat that they might try to resume operations, or lead to a threat of any new contamination,” said Pruce-Zimmerman. “It really sounded to us like this permit allows them to keep a very small skeleton amount of mitigation that they’re doing underway.”

Active Bethel Citizens and other groups including Beyond Toxics are still concerned over long-term health effects from dioxins and possible other contaminants that the Baxter site has released over its years of operation.

[LRAPA is holding a public hearing](#) on May 9th at 5:30pm on the Baxter permit, at the Downtown Public Library in Eugene. A [public comment period](#) is also going through May 26<sup>th</sup>.

## Tags

[Environment](#)[jh baxter](#)[LRAPA](#)

## Brian Bull

Brian Bull joined the KLCC News Team in June 2016. In his 25+ years as a public

KLCC  
1A