



# Spill Update: Whitley Fuel Fire and Petroleum Spill

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** July 26, 2007

4:00 p.m./Release # 5

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Web site: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/spills/incidents/whitleyfire/whitleyfire.html>

## **Spill Status Report as of 4:00 p.m.**

**Date of spill:** July 23, 2007

**Responsible Party:** Whitley Fuel LLC

**Location:** Whitley Fuel, 2733 N. Pittsburg Road, Spokane

**Type of petroleum products:** mixed (includes motor oil, diesel fuel, racing fuel, hydraulic and transmission fluid, lubricating oil, etc.)

**Amount spilled:** Unknown

**Cause or source of the spill:** Fire (cause under investigation)

**Organizations involved:** Washington state departments of Ecology and Fish & Wildlife, City of Spokane Water Department, Spokane Regional Health District, Whitley Fuel LLC, and private environmental cleanup contractors.

## **Update**

### **Human exposure and health issues**

- Spokane Regional Health District is evaluating the public health risk that might be present due to petroleum and cleanup products in the environment following the Whitley Fuel fire and the ensuing response on Monday evening.
- People should avoid exposure to breathing petroleum vapors and any contact with oily residues associated with this incident.
- The current risk to public health from petroleum and cleanup products at the site of the Whitley Fuels fire appears to be low. We are continuing to monitor the situation.
- The current risk to public health from petroleum and cleanup products entering the city's stormwater system and the Spokane River appears to be low; however, we are still investigating the situation.

- Spokane Regional Health District recommends that people avoid swimming, fishing or other water recreation in the lower portion of the Spokane River, below the outfall, until further notice.
- People living in the vicinity of the Whitley Fuel fire are asked to move their vehicles to allow the city street maintenance crews to clean up residual runoff along the streets and curbs.

### **Stormwater drain cleanup**

- The City of Spokane Wastewater Management Department is in the second day of a week-long process of “hydro-cleaning” the stormwater system. This means that large vacuums will clean the water out of the pipes and a de-greasing agent will be used to wash the pipe.
- Citizens can help protect the Spokane River by avoiding major water use, such as power-washing equipment, washing cars in their yards, excessive watering – any kind of water use that can flow to storm drains in the area of Mission Avenue to Francis Avenue in North Spokane.

### **Spokane River activities**

- Today, no oil has been found in the Spokane River by crews who surveyed the river by boat. However, samples have been taken and are being sent to a laboratory for analysis to confirm whether or not areas seen from the air yesterday contain any oil.
- Those areas may have had weathered petroleum products visible yesterday that was gone by today.

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