

Spokane Regional Toxics Task Force – collaboration, innovation, progress

Joint Key Messages

We are governmental agencies, private industry, and environmental organizations collaborating and leading efforts to find and reduce PCBs and dioxins in the Spokane River and Lake Spokane.

What we are doing:

- Gathering and analyzing existing and future data to better characterize the amounts, sources, and locations of PCBs and dioxins in the environment and the Spokane River.
- Preparing recommendations for controlling and reducing these sources of toxics in the Spokane River.
- Monitoring and assessing the effectiveness of toxics reduction measures.

We are working together on a new approach that identifies sources of PCBs and dioxins, directly applies a plan for reduction and elimination, and results in improvements to the river.

The task force is the only regional group in Washington and Idaho that is working to answer the tough questions and make measurable progress towards reducing PCBs, dioxins, and their sources.

We expect this innovative approach to be faster and less expensive than the traditional method for improving the river.

Environmental and human health messages

The Spokane River does not meet water quality standards for PCBs and dioxins.

In the past 20 years there has been a significant decrease of PCBs in the river because of cleanup and regulatory actions.

PCBs and dioxins remain in our environment, including our lakes and rivers. Here they persist and travel up through the food chain, potentially resulting in adverse impacts to humans and the environment.

About PCBs and dioxins

Many people don't know that PCBs, once considered only a "legacy pollutant", are still being produced as a result of manufacturing processes.

PCBs can be found in the products we buy and use every day including pigments used in paints, dyes, and inks, and other common consumer products like motor oil, soaps, and caulk.

What you can do

Managing PCBs and preventing them from entering the environment will take a comprehensive approach that addresses many sources including consumer products.

As we learn more, we will communicate with the public on how they can further reduce PCBs and help protect our river.