

WAC 173-340-800 Property access. (1) Normal entry procedures.

Whenever there is a reasonable basis to believe that a release or threatened release of a hazardous substance may exist, the department's authorized employees, agents or contractors may, after reasonable notice, enter upon any real property, public or private, to conduct investigations or remedial actions. The notice shall briefly describe the reason for requesting access. For the purpose of this subsection, unless earlier access is granted, reasonable notice shall mean:

(a) Written notice to the site owner and operator to the extent known to the department, sent through the United States Postal Service at least three days before entry; or

(b) Notice to the site owner and operator to the extent known to the department, in person or by telephone at least twenty-four hours before entry.

(2) Notification of property owner. The department shall ask a resident, occupant, or other persons in custody of the site to identify the name and address of owners of the property. If an owner is identified who has not been previously notified, the department shall make a prompt and reasonable effort to notify such owners of remedial actions planned or conducted.

(3) Orders and consent decrees. Whenever investigations or remedial actions are conducted under a decree or order, a potentially liable person shall not deny access to the department's authorized employees, agents, or contractors to enter and move freely about the property to oversee and verify investigations and remedial actions being performed.

(4) Ongoing operations. Persons gaining access under this section shall take all reasonable precautions to avoid disrupting the ongoing operations on a site. Such persons shall comply with all state and federal safety and health requirements that the department determines to be applicable.

(5) Access to documents. The department's authorized employees, agents or contractors may, after reasonable notice, enter property for the purpose of inspecting documents relating to a release or threatened release at the facility. Persons maintaining such documents shall:

(a) Provide access during normal business hours and allow the department to copy these documents; or

(b) At the department's request, provide legible copies of the requested documents to the department.

(6) Emergency entry. Notice by the department's authorized employees, agents, or contractors is not required for entry onto property to investigate, mitigate, or abate an emergency posed by the release or threatened release of a hazardous substance. The department will make efforts that are reasonable under the circumstances to promptly notify those owners and operators to the extent known to the department of the actions taken.

(7) Other authorities. Where consent has not been obtained for entry, the department shall secure access in a manner consistent with state and federal law, including compliance with any warrant requirements. Nothing in this chapter shall affect site access authority granted under other state laws and regulations.

(8) Access by potentially liable persons. The department shall make reasonable efforts to facilitate access to real property and documents for persons who are conducting remedial actions under either an order or decree.

(9) Information sharing. The department will provide the documents and factual information on releases or threatened releases obtained through this section to persons who request such in accordance with chapter 42.17 RCW and chapter 173-03 WAC. The department does not intend application of these authorities to limit its sharing of such factual information.

(10) Split samples. Whenever the department intends to perform sampling at a site, it shall indicate in its notification under subsection (1) of this section whether sampling may occur. The person receiving notice may take split samples, provided this does not interfere with the department's sampling.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 70.105D RCW. WSR 01-05-024 (Order 97-09A), § 173-340-800, filed 2/12/01, effective 8/15/01; WSR 90-08-086, § 173-340-800, filed 4/3/90, effective 5/4/90.]