Technical Assistance Program Fact Sheet

The Washington State Pollution Liability Agency (PLIA) Advice and Technical Assistance Program (TAP) is established under Chapter 374-80 WAC. TAP assists owners and operators of eligible gasoline/diesel or heating oil storage tanks with petroleum cleanups. TAP offers advice and guidance to help program participants meet the requirements of the state's cleanup laws.

Washington State's Environmental Cleanup Law: Model Toxics Control Act

The Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA)[1] is Washington's environmental cleanup law. MTCA sets standards for contaminated site cleanups to protect people's health and the environment.

Under MTCA, you may be liable for cleanup and natural resource damages caused by a petroleum release from your tank. The Department of Ecology (Ecology) may also list your property on the Contaminated Sites List. Contamination and inclusion on this list may make it difficult to obtain bank financing or sell your property.

MTCA Cleanup Process

Find the required steps to clean up a contaminated site under the MTCA cleanup regulations listed below. Sites can enter TAP at any stage of the cleanup process.

- The **Remedial Investigation (RI)** defines the type and extent of contamination. It also identifies impacts to human health and the environment.
- The **Feasibility Study (FS)** valuates the effectiveness of different cleanup actions.
- The **Cleanup Action Plan (CAP)** describes the cleanup methods and how they will meet the state's cleanup standards.
- The **Site Cleanup** removes pollution from the site, contains it on-site, or treats it to make it less toxic.
- Finally, **Ongoing Monitoring** confirms that the institutional controls, or measures taken to maintain the integrity of the cleanup, remain effective.

For more information on these processes, please see our TAP Guidance Document.

1. Chapter 70A.305 RCW Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA) and its implementing regulations Chapter 173-340 WAC.

Image: "2015 - Washington State - Diablo Lake" by Ted's photos - Returns in December is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.

PLIA Technical Assistance Program

TAP is a voluntary program for people cleaning up a release from gasoline/diesel and heating oil tanks. PLIA offers informal advice and assistance regarding cleanup activities to program participants through the following process:

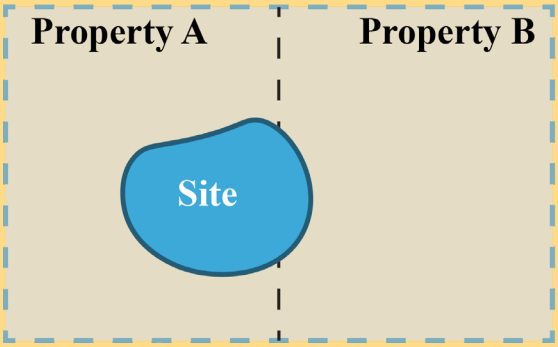
1. Your consultant submits site reports or cleanup plans to PLIA requesting an opinion.
2. PLIA reviews the submitted materials.
3. PLIA issues an opinion letter stating whether the completed or proposed work meets the MTCA requirements. Types of written opinions include:
   - **Work Plan Approval:** The proposed work plan is likely to meet MTCA requirements.
   - **Further Action:** The site needs more work to meet the MTCA requirements.
   - **No Further Action:** The cleanup meets the substantive requirements of MTCA. Some sites require an environmental covenant to control potential risks posed by residual contamination.

PLIA's approval of your completed cleanup can satisfy concerns or requirements of a potential buyer or lender and remove your property from the HSL and CSCSL.

Site vs. Property

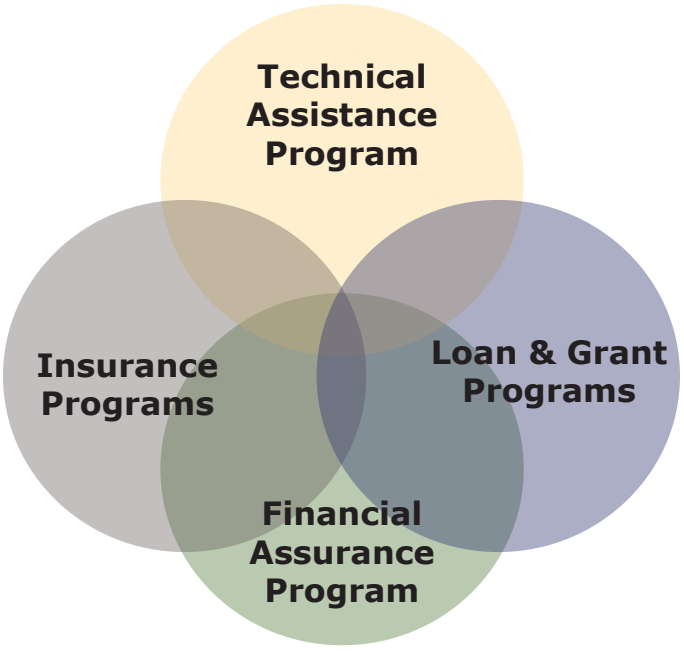
The **site** is where the contamination is located. The property line defines the **property**. The site may include multiple property boundaries.

Your property will remain on the HSL and CSCL until cleanup of the entire site is complete.



*Disclaimer: Determination of the actual site boundary is based on PLIA's site review of environmental reports and documents.

TAP Process: Enrollment Fees



A site may be enrolled in more than one PLIA Program.

You must pay the TAP fee before PLIA can provide opinion letters.

The enrollment fee is:

- Heating Oil: $1,500 per release/tank system.
- Gasoline/Diesel: $10,000 per release/tank system.

You can pay online at PLIA's website or by mailing a check. If you have enrolled in another PLIA program, you can also pay the fee directly from those program funds.

TAP Process: Application

You can submit a TAP application through PLIA's Online Community. Before you can access the Online Community, you will need to create a Secure Access Washington (SAW) account. You can find instructions on how to create a SAW account and log in to PLIA's Community in our How-to Guide. You, your environmental consultant, or representative can complete and submit the TAP application.

Your TAP application is complete when the following items are submitted or completed:

- Online application.
- Any electronic copies of environmental reports.
- Scheduled intake meeting for gasoline/diesel sites. You are not required to attend an intake meeting for heating oil sites.

For heating oil sites, pay the enrollment fee with the application. For gasoline/diesel sites, PLIA recommends submitting your enrollment fee payment after the intake meeting to ensure program eligibility.

Selecting an Environmental Consultant

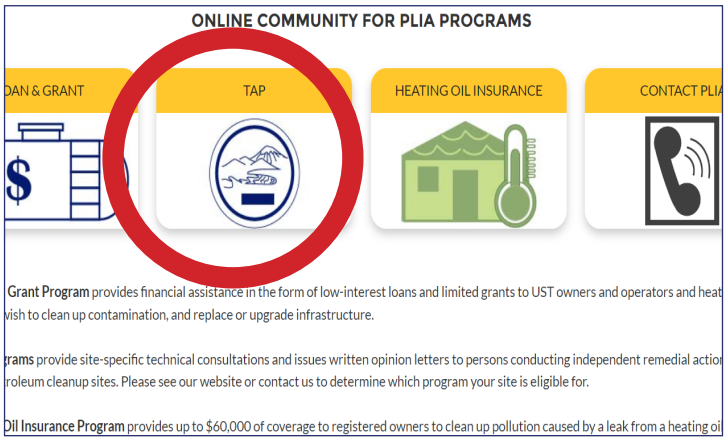
PLIA recommends hiring an environmental consultant to perform cleanup work at your site. PLIA does not promote or endorse any environmental consultant or business.

Please review the following information before selecting an environmental consultant:

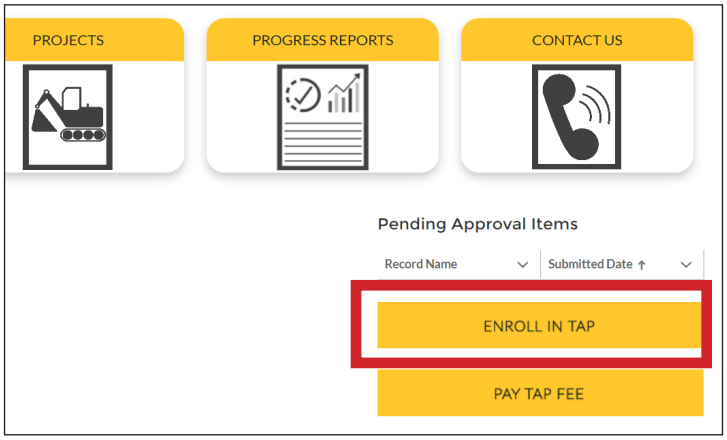
- Department of Labor & Industries' consumer guide.

Accessing the TAP Application in PLIA's Online Community

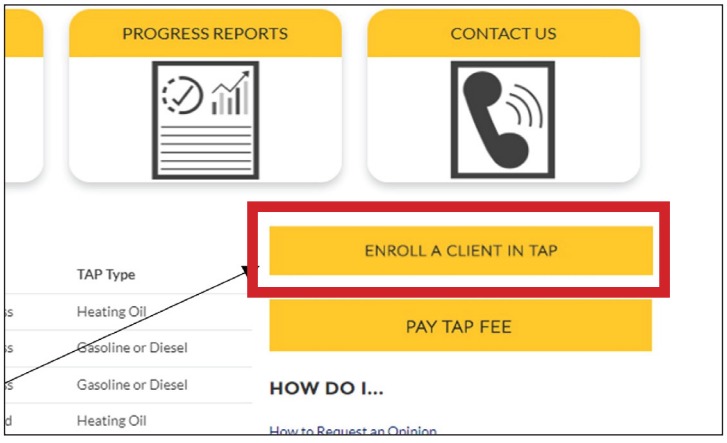
Step 1:
Select the TAP button.



Step 2 (for customers):
Select the "Enroll in TAP" button.

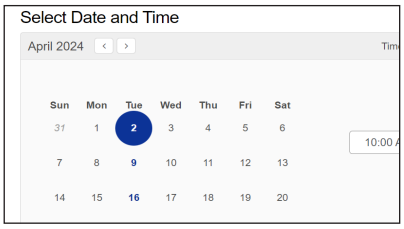


Step 2 (for consultants applying on behalf of a client):
Click the "Enroll a Client in TAP" button.



TAP Process: Intake Meeting

All gasoline/diesel site owners must attend an intake meeting. Intake meetings are optional for heating oil sites. Prior to the intake meeting, PLIA assigns a Site Manager to review your project and issue opinion letters. You will have the opportunity to discuss your site cleanup goals with your Site Manager at the intake meeting. After the intake meeting, you can decide if you want to enroll in TAP.



During the intake meeting we:

- Provide an overview of TAP and services provided.
- Discuss your site's background and current condition.
- Confirm eligibility in the program.
- Work with you to set a timeline for achieving project milestones.
- Provide an overview of the remaining actions needed to receive a No Further Action opinion.

PLIA does not charge a fee for having a 45-minute intake meeting. Intake meetings are self-scheduled using our online calendar. PLIA conducts meetings remotely and by video conference.

TAP Process: Program Acceptance

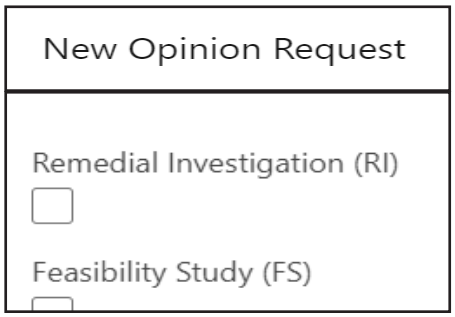
After you attend an intake meeting (only required for gasoline/diesel sites) and pay the program fee, you will receive an email confirming your program acceptance. The email also includes a link to view your project in PLIA's web-based portal, the Online Community.

Once you have access to the Online Community, you can contact your Site Manager for advice. You can also request opinions on any proposed or completed cleanup work.

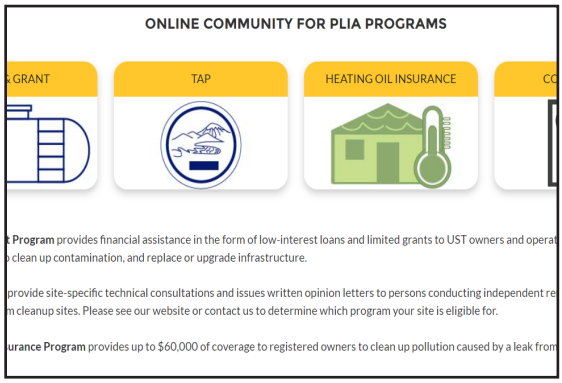
TAP Process: Requesting an Opinion

To request a written opinion, you or your environmental consultant must submit an opinion request through the Online Community. Your Site Manager will receive the request in their queue for review.

PLIA's goal is to provide opinions within 90 days for heating oil sites and 70 days for gasoline/diesel sites. PLIA provides written opinions electronically via email. You can also access opinions in the Online Community.



Online Community



PLIA's Online Community is a web-based system. The Online Community allows TAP customers and their environmental consultants the ability to view and submit information. The system provides access to "real time" information about your opinion request status.

Before accessing the Online Community, you will first need to set up a SAW account. You can find details on how to create a SAW account and log in to the Online Community in our How-to Guide.

Additional Resources

Statutory Authority and Agency Rules

- Chapter 374-80 WAC - Advice and Technical Assistance Program
- Chapter 70A.330 RCW - Petroleum Storage Tank Systems - Pollution Liability Protection Act
- Chapter 70A.305 RCW - Hazardous Waste Cleanup - Model Toxics Control Act
- Chapter 173-340 WAC - Model Toxics Control Act - Cleanup

PLIA Resources

- Technical Assistance Program
- UST Loan and Grant Program
- Heating Oil Loan and Grant Program
- Heating Oil Insurance Program
- Financial Assurance Program
- How to Create a SAW Account and Access PLIA's Online Community
- PLIA's Online Community
- Schedule an Intake Meeting

Department of Labor & Industries Resource

- Department of Labor & Industries' consumer guide

Department of Ecology Resources

- How to report a release
- Submit Environmental Information Monitoring Data
- Department of Ecology's Cleanup and Tank Search
- Department of Ecology's Voluntary Cleanup Program
- Department of Ecology's report on selecting an environmental consulting firm
- Contaminated Site Register page
- Guidance for Remediation of Petroleum Contaminated Sites

Washington State
Pollution Liability Insurance Agency
Phone: (800) 822-3905
Email: pliamail@plia.wa.gov
Website: www.plia.wa.gov

PLIA offers language interpretation services for our customers and partners at no charge. Please let us know when contacting us.
To request materials in an alternative format, call PLIA at 800-822-3905. Relay Service 711, or TTY at 1-800-833-6388.