

June 5, 2026

Executive Director
Northwest Maritime Center
431 Water Street
Port Townsend WA 98368
360-385-3628 | nwmaritime.org

RE: Port Townsend Paper Company — A Request for Your Voice on Bay Safety — V_1.17

Dear Executive Director,

I write with a simple and direct request: we want Port Townsend Paper Company to make safety, health, and the environment their number one priority. Not their second priority. Not a consideration balanced against production schedules and profit margins. Number one.

I am a Port Townsend resident writing to the Northwest Maritime Center because your institution — one of the most respected voices in the maritime community of the Pacific Northwest — has a direct stake in the health of Port Townsend Bay and in the safety of the industrial facility operating on its shores.

PTPC operates a kraft pulp and paper mill on 450 acres bordering Port Townsend Bay, five miles from Port Townsend's residential neighborhoods. The mill produces 950–1,000 tons per day using the kraft process — the same white liquor chemistry (sodium hydroxide and sodium sulfide) that killed 11 workers in Longview, Washington on May 26, 2026, when a white liquor tank imploded at the Nippon Dynawave mill in the deadliest industrial accident in modern Washington State history.

PTPC's documented compliance record is public in US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)'s EPA Enforcement and Compliance History Online (ECHO) database (FRS ID: 110000490326):

- Clean Air Act: High Priority Violation every single quarter for the past three years
- Clean Water Act: documented spills into Port Townsend Bay including: 800 gallons of untreated process wastewater (November 2021–March 2022, fine \$27,000); 114,000 gallons of untreated wastewater near Glen Cove (April 2025, fine \$20,000 — less than 9 cents per gallon); and 1,000 gallons of condensed water (January 2025) — plus two additional Ecology penalties issued in 2023 for 2022 water quality violations
- Hazardous Waste: June 2025 inspection found 9 violations including emergency preparedness failures
- 12 million gallons of effluent (liquid waste or wastewater discharged into the environment) discharged into Port Townsend Bay every day
- The size, age, and inspection history of PTPC's white liquor storage tanks are not publicly disclosed — white liquor is exempt from US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)'s Risk Management Program

In 2024, the federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) confirmed hydrogen sulfide and other sulfur compounds near PTPC exceed US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) chronic health reference concentrations. The Pacific Northwest sits on the Cascadia Subduction Zone, capable of producing a magnitude 9.0 earthquake. A major seismic event could rupture PTPC's white liquor tanks, overwhelm secondary containment, and send caustic chemicals directly into Port Townsend Bay.

The Northwest Maritime Center sits on Port Townsend Bay. Your programs, your students, your wooden boat festivals, and your community mission all depend on a healthy, accessible, and safe bay. Port Townsend Paper Company discharges 12 million gallons of treated effluent (liquid waste or wastewater discharged into the environment) into that bay every single day. In April 2025, 114,630 gallons of untreated industrial wastewater spilled directly into the bay. PTPC declined to answer whether it was safe to eat shellfish from Glen Cove.

What I Am Asking:

- Consider formally writing to Port Townsend Paper Company requesting independent Whole Effluent Toxicity (WET) testing of bay discharge, white liquor tank inspection with public results, and real-time outfall monitoring with public data feeds
- Use the Northwest Maritime Center's public voice to call for independent bay water quality testing near the PTPC discharge outfall — shellfish tissue testing, sediment sampling, and biological assessment
- Consider formally supporting the activation of the Jefferson County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) and the development of an emergency response plan specifically addressing a white liquor release into Port Townsend Bay

The Northwest Maritime Center is a trusted community institution. Your voice on the health of Port Townsend Bay carries weight that a community petition alone cannot match. I welcome the opportunity to share the full body of research I have compiled.

Respectfully,

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