

June 5, 2026

Dan Nelson, Communications Manager
Mike Shults, Compliance Manager
Olympic Region Clean Air Agency (ORCAA)
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RE: Request for Olympic Region Clean Air Agency (ORCAA) Community Air Monitoring and Public Advocacy Following the Longview Disaster — V_1.13

Dear Mr. Nelson and Mr. Shults,

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, Washington resident writing to the Olympic Region Clean Air Agency (ORCAA) about a crisis in our community's air quality and industrial safety in the wake of the Longview disaster. I understand that ORCAA does not hold direct permitting authority over Port Townsend Paper Company — that authority rests with the Washington State Department of Ecology. But ORCAA is the regional air quality agency serving Jefferson County. ORCAA monitors ambient air in our community, receives odor complaints from our neighbors, and has already engaged the public on PTPC's emissions through the 2024 Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) Exposure Investigation. That engagement must continue and must intensify.

On May 26, 2026, eleven workers died at the Nippon Dynawave kraft paper mill in Longview, Washington, when a 900,000-gallon white liquor tank imploded — the deadliest industrial accident in modern Washington State history. OPB interviewed seven chemical safety experts who confirmed the implosion mechanism involved a blockage that prevented air backfilling the tank as liquid was pumped out, creating catastrophic negative pressure. Workers had reported a structural warning to the Division of Occupational Safety and Health two months before the disaster. No action was taken.

PTPC operates the identical kraft pulping process — the same white liquor chemistry, sodium hydroxide and sodium sulfide — on 450 acres bordering Port Townsend Bay, five miles from residential neighborhoods. PTPC's daily output of 950–1,000 tons per day exceeds Nippon Dynawave's. The size, age, and inspection history of PTPC's white liquor tanks are not publicly disclosed. White liquor is exempt from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Risk Management Program — there is no required public safety plan, no mandated tank disclosure, and no worst-case release scenario on file anywhere.

PTPC's air compliance record warrants ORCAA's direct attention:

- Clean Air Act: High Priority Violation for all 12 of the last 12 consecutive quarters in EPA Enforcement and Compliance History Online (ECHO) — the maximum noncompliance period tracked.
- Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) 2024: Federal scientists confirmed hydrogen sulfide, methyl mercaptan, dimethyl sulfide, and dimethyl disulfide measured near PTPC above EPA chronic health reference concentrations. ORCAA participated in public outreach on this report.
- ORCAA's Blue Heron School monitor captures ambient data near the facility but has not been configured or resourced to conduct a systematic monitoring campaign specifically targeted at PTPC's Total Reduced Sulfur (TRS) compounds and volatile organic compound emissions.

On June 1, 2026, Port Townsend Paper Company issued a public statement indicating it has met with industry experts, verified that tank vents are open and overflow lines are not submerged, and is scheduling non-destructive testing of tanks in 2026. These are welcome initial steps. They are not, however, a substitute for the independent inspection with publicly disclosed results that this community is requesting. The key questions remain unanswered: the sizes, ages, and inspection histories of PTPC's white liquor tanks are still not public information.

Requests to the Olympic Region Clean Air Agency (ORCAA):

- Deploy targeted ambient air monitoring at community sites downwind of PTPC — prioritizing Total Reduced Sulfur (TRS) compound measurement — and make real-time data publicly available in a format accessible to Port Townsend residents.
- Issue a formal public communication to Jefferson County residents explaining ORCAA's role and limitations regarding PTPC, what air quality data ORCAA is collecting, and how residents can access it — consistent with ORCAA's prior public outreach role during the 2024 ATSDR Exposure Investigation.
- Formally transmit to the Washington State Department of Ecology — PTPC's permitting authority — ORCAA's community air monitoring data, odor complaint records, and a written request that Ecology conduct an immediate comprehensive air compliance inspection of PTPC and make findings publicly available.
- Provide ORCAA's existing odor complaint data for PTPC — including complaint frequency, timing, and geographic distribution — to the community in a publicly accessible format.
- Support and advocate for the US Chemical Safety Board expanding its Longview investigation scope to include all remaining Washington State kraft mills, including PTPC.

Port Townsend Bay is a marine bay adjacent to 33,944 residents and is home to treaty-protected tribal fishing rights. It has received PTPC's industrial discharge for more than 100 years. Federal ATSDR scientists have confirmed toxic Total Reduced Sulfur (TRS) compounds above health reference levels near the facility. ORCAA is the voice of clean air in this region. The Longview disaster has given every agency — including ORCAA, within the scope of its authority — both the

justification and the public mandate to act. I welcome the opportunity to share my full research documentation with your team.

Respectfully,

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