

June 5, 2026

Commanding Officer

Naval Magazine Indian Island (NAVMAG Indian Island)

Naval Munitions Command Pacific CONUS West Division Unit Indian Island

Port Hadlock, Washington 98339

RE: Port Townsend Paper Company White Liquor Safety — A Concern with Direct Implications for Naval Operations in Admiralty Inlet

Dear Commanding Officer,

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 writing to you because I believe Naval Magazine Indian Island has a direct and consequential stake in whether that happens — and because the Navy's voice carries weight that a community petition alone cannot match.

The Geographic Reality

Naval Magazine Indian Island (NAVMAG Indian Island) sits directly across Admiralty Inlet from PTPC. PTPC operates a kraft pulp and paper mill on 450 acres bordering Port Townsend Bay — the same body of water that feeds directly into Admiralty Inlet, the waterway that every vessel entering and leaving Indian Island must transit.

Every day, PTPC discharges 12 million gallons of treated effluent (liquid waste or wastewater discharged into the environment) into Port Townsend Bay — more than all other Jefferson County dischargers combined. The mill stores white liquor — a highly caustic mixture of sodium hydroxide and sodium sulfide — in tanks of undisclosed size, age, and inspection status on its 450-acre waterfront property.

The Longview Disaster — May 26, 2026

One week ago, eleven workers died at the Nippon Dynawave kraft paper mill in Longview, Washington — the deadliest industrial accident in modern Washington State history — when a white liquor storage tank imploded. Governor Ferguson called it 'the deadliest industrial tragedy in modern Washington State history.' The US Chemical Safety Board (CSB) has opened a formal investigation.

PTPC operates the identical kraft process. The same chemistry. The same white liquor. The same potential for catastrophic failure. 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 worst-case release scenario, and no public emergency response protocol for a white liquor release near Port Townsend Bay.

Why This Matters to Naval Magazine Indian Island

- A catastrophic white liquor release into Port Townsend Bay would contaminate Admiralty Inlet — the waterway used by every vessel transiting to and from Indian Island. Sodium hydroxide and sodium sulfide at high concentrations are lethal to marine life and corrosive to vessel hulls and mechanical systems.
- NAVMAG Indian Island has received the Secretary of the Navy Environmental Award for sustainability and the Commander, Navy Installation Command Installation Excellence Award. A major industrial chemical release in adjacent waters would directly conflict with the installation's documented environmental stewardship commitments.
- The Navy has extensive experience with chemical safety and hazardous materials management. The Navy's institutional knowledge of large-scale chemical storage risk — and its public commitment to environmental protection — makes the Commanding Officer a credible and powerful voice in demanding that PTPC adopt the same standards the Navy holds itself to.
- Emergency response to a major white liquor release into Port Townsend Bay and Admiralty Inlet would necessarily involve Navy cooperation — yet no formal emergency response plan exists for such a scenario in this area. The Jefferson County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), required by the federal Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) since 1986, is currently described on the county website as 'in its formative stage' after 35 years.

What I Am Asking

I am not asking the Navy to take a public political position. I am asking whether the Commanding Officer of Naval Magazine Indian Island would be willing to:

- Request that PTPC provide a formal briefing to Naval Magazine Indian Island on white liquor storage tank safety, inspection history, and emergency response protocols — as a matter of good-neighbor industrial safety practice between adjacent facilities.
- Request that the Jefferson County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) be formally convened and that an emergency response plan for a major white liquor release into Port Townsend Bay and Admiralty Inlet be developed with Navy participation.
- Formally support community and regulatory requests for independent inspection of PTPC's white liquor storage infrastructure — not as a political act, but as a safety precaution consistent with the Navy's own environmental stewardship standards.

The community around Port Townsend Bay has filed nearly 2,000 odor complaints related to PTPC between 2016 and 2021 alone. Federal scientists from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) confirmed in 2024 that toxic sulfur compounds near PTPC

exceed US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) chronic health reference concentrations. The mill's compliance record — documented in US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)'s publicly available EPA Enforcement and Compliance History Online (ECHO) database — includes 12 consecutive quarters of Clean Air Act High Priority Violations.

The Navy and the community of Port Townsend share Admiralty Inlet. What threatens the bay threatens us both. I would welcome the opportunity to brief you or your staff on the full body of research I have compiled.

Respectfully,

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