In 1947 the nation and the world were just coming out of the turmoil of World War II. The baby boom was ramping up, and technological optimism was in the air. Urgent research for wartime purposes had created scores of new substances that, in peacetime, made for "better living through chemistry." Imperceptibly, it became commonplace to use the fruits of war for everything from lawn care to pregnancy care..."

"In line with its time, a small program to train undergraduate students in sanitary science began in the Department of Public Health and Preventive Medicine at the University of Washington's new School of Medicine in 1947. Alvin Green, an energetic sanitary engineer and the Director of Sanitation for the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, was the first faculty member.

Milestones

Noontime smog on a street in Donora, PA, 1948

Killer smog in Donora, Pennsylvania kills 20 and sickens thousands

Peak transit use occurred during World War II

McCarthy hearings influence the nation including Colleges and Universities

1948 - Mueller receives Nobel Prize for discovering the insecticidal qualities of DDT

On the heels of WWII, a million war veterans enroll in colleges under the GI Bill

People and Collaborators

Rachel Carson, c. 1940

1941 - Weyerhaeuser Company dedicates the nation's first tree farm near Montesano, WA

1943 - Warren Magnuson elected to US Senate

Diesel buses and rubber-tired trolleys replaced streetcars

1946 - University of Washington opens its School of Medicine; includes Department of Preventive Medicine and Public Health with Leland Powers named first Chair

Our Role

Health Sciences Building, 1949

An “Environmental Health” division is created within the Department of Preventive Medicine, including an undergraduate program in Sanitary Science

1947 - UW Sanitary Science program begins with five students

1948 - Construction of the Health Sciences Building

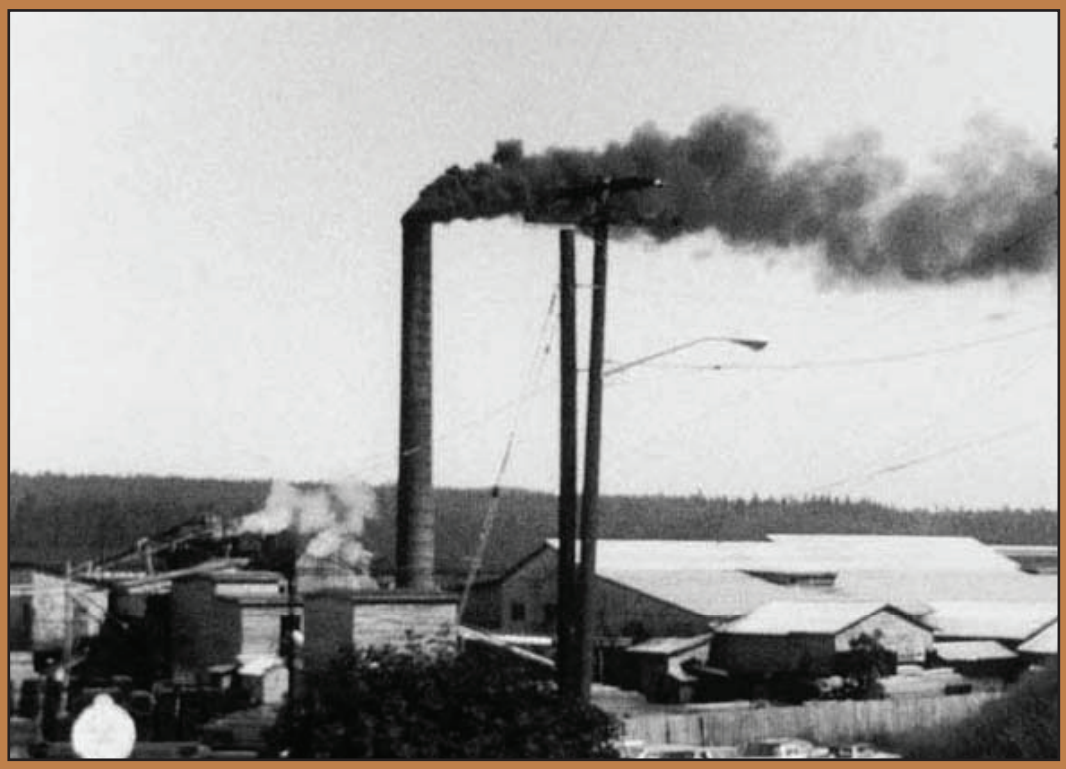
UW tuition for resident undergraduate students is $25 per quarter (1947)

1949 - The department had $56,200 in grants for the year

1940s

As the world beyond the university evolved, so did the undergraduate program. The curriculum developed by Al Green followed the Recommendations for the Professional Development of Sanitarians developed by the American Public Health Association. In 1951, the Kellogg Foundation sponsored a conference on undergraduate education in sanitary science, which further defined the optimum curriculum for training sanitarians. The US curriculum, consisting of courses in food and milk sanitation, industrial hygiene, vector control, and impacts of biological agents on human health, was right on target.

Milestones



Smokestack industries in Ballard, WA, c. 1959

1950 - World Population is 2.5 billion people

1951 - Forest fire burns 33,000 acres and 32 buildings in Forks, WA

1954 - Atomic Energy Act

1955 - Air Pollution Control Act

1959 - UW scientist collects blood sample of first documented case of HIV

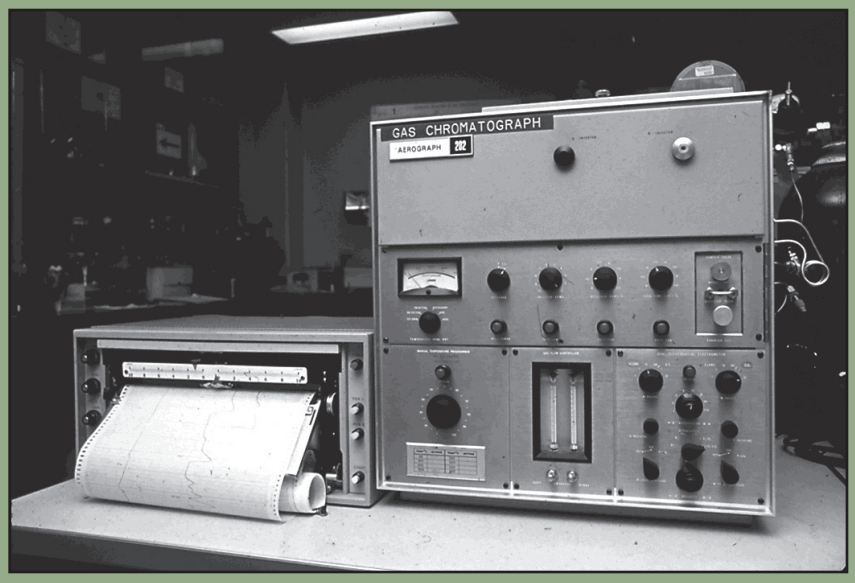
The Health Sciences Library, 1950

1951 - An Environmental Research Laboratory was established to provide industrial hygiene services for industry and air pollution studies for local governments

1952 - Henry (Scoop) Jackson elected to US Senate

Metro re-electrifies some bus lines

Seattle Air Pollution Advisory Board formed



An early gas chromatograph

1951 - Environmental Research Laboratory officially established in School of Medicine

Environmental Health Lab contracts with the City of Seattle for air quality analysis

1954 - The School of Public Health offers options in health education, sanitation, or statistics. About 25 students are enrolled as majors.

1956 - Prior to this date, faculty members from the undergraduate program held part-time appointments as campus sanitarians

UW tuition for resident undergraduate students is $61 per quarter including fees (1957)

By the 1960s,

it became apparent that better living through chemistry had its downside. Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, published in 1962, awakened the public to threats industrial chemicals posed to human health and the environment. Concern over toxic pollutants was added to concern over sanitation, and the UW's undergraduate program in sanitary science began to expand to include chemical agents and toxicology.

SPHCM faculty, 1965

Milestones

Highway traffic during the 1960s

1962 - Rachel Carson publishes, *Silent Spring*

1963 - Clean Air Act

1965 - Solid Waste Disposal Act

1967 - Washington State Clean Air Act

Forward Thrust proposal for rapid rail

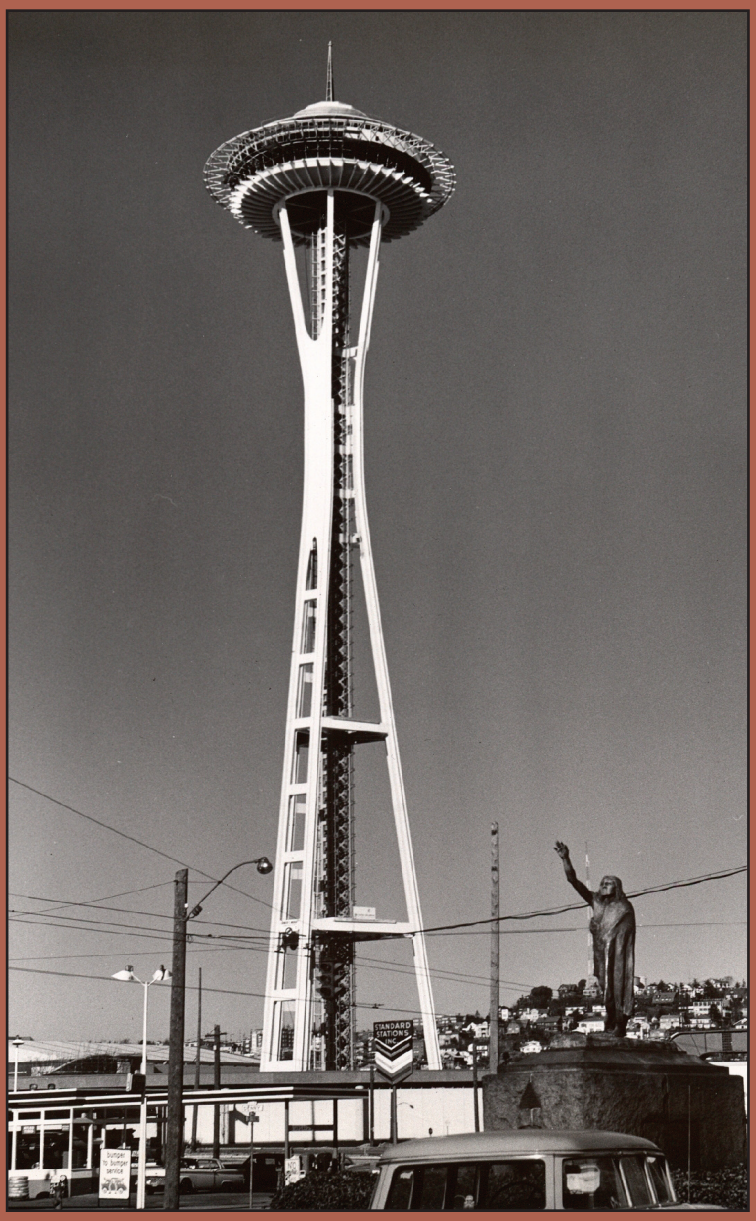
The Puget Sound Air Pollution Control Agency (PSAPCA) is formed

1968-75 - Air pollution from forest burning

1969 - National Environmental Policy Act

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Wilderness Act, and Scenic Rivers Act passed

People and Collaborators



The Space Needle nearing completion in 1961. Seattle World's Fair took place in April, 1962.

1961 - Seattle Air Pollution Control Ordinance

1965 - Dan Evans elected governor

Interstate 5 and Evergreen Point Bridge completed without rail transit

Natural gas pipelines reach Seattle and the Gas Works plant closes

Our Role

SPHCM faculty, 1967

1963 - Washington State Legislature funds the Environmental Research Laboratory to do research, teaching, and service in occupational health

The F-wing is added to the Health Sciences Center

Metro tunnel air tested by our EH lab

Peter A. Breysse is chairman of the Seattle-King County Air Pollution Advisory Board.

1967 - Environmental Health (EH) undergraduate program accredited

UW tuition for resident undergraduate students is $115 per quarter including fees (1967)

1960s

The 1970s were a time of environmental awakening across the United States. The energy crisis of the early ‘70s set ordinary people to seriously worrying about how long finite supplies of petroleum and other natural resources would last. The first Earth Day opened the public’s eyes to broad environmental ills. New environmental laws, new government agencies, and new academic disciplines arose almost overnight. Undergraduate programs labeled “environmental studies,” “environmental science,” “outdoor education,” and “environmental health” sprang up nationwide.

Milestones

A cropduster spreading pesticide

Three Mile Island suffered a partial meltdown, the worst civilian nuclear accident in US history

Catalytic converter invented

1976 - Toxic Substances Control Act

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act

Metro takes over failing bus systems in Seattle

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is established

The first Earth Day held

Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA)

1972 - Clean Water Act

People and Collaborators

William Rucklehaus was the first and fifth director of the EPA

Washington Industrial Safety and Health Act

1976 - Seattle City Council rejects nuclear power in favor of conservation

1977 - NIOSH establishes Northwest Center for Occupational Health & Safety

1979 - UW Institute for Environmental Studies recruits a new Assistant Professor in “Environmental Toxicology”

1970 - School of Public Health and Community Medicine formed at UW

Our Role

Attending a DEH faculty meeting, Jack Hatlen and Pete Breysse

Department of Environmental Health established as a new department in the School of Public Health and Community Medicine (SPHCM)

Environmental Health major capped at 50 students; tuition per quarter is $188.

Auto body shop study investigated by Industrial Hygiene group

1977 - EH Laboratory first accredited by the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA), as one of the first wave of laboratories accredited nationally to perform industrial hygiene analyses. It has continuously maintained this accreditation.

1970s

1980s

Throughout the 1980s, the department grew as faculty were added to meet the needs of growing graduate and research programs in occupational medicine; toxicology; industrial hygiene; and the more traditional sanitation fields, now named “environmental health.” Faculty research, coupled with the continuing BS requirement for an internship with local public health agencies, kept the program strong. By the mid-1980s, however, a sluggish economy lowered enrollment university-wide, including in the undergraduate environmental health major.

photo: Mount St.Helens eruption on May 18, 1980

Milestones

1980 - Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act

Congress passes the Superfund law in response to the Love Canal disaster

1982 - Earth Summit meets

1984 - In Bhopal, India an industrial pesticide leak kills between 2500 and 5000 people

1986 - In Chernobyl, Soviet Union, the worst nuclear power plant disaster in history occurs

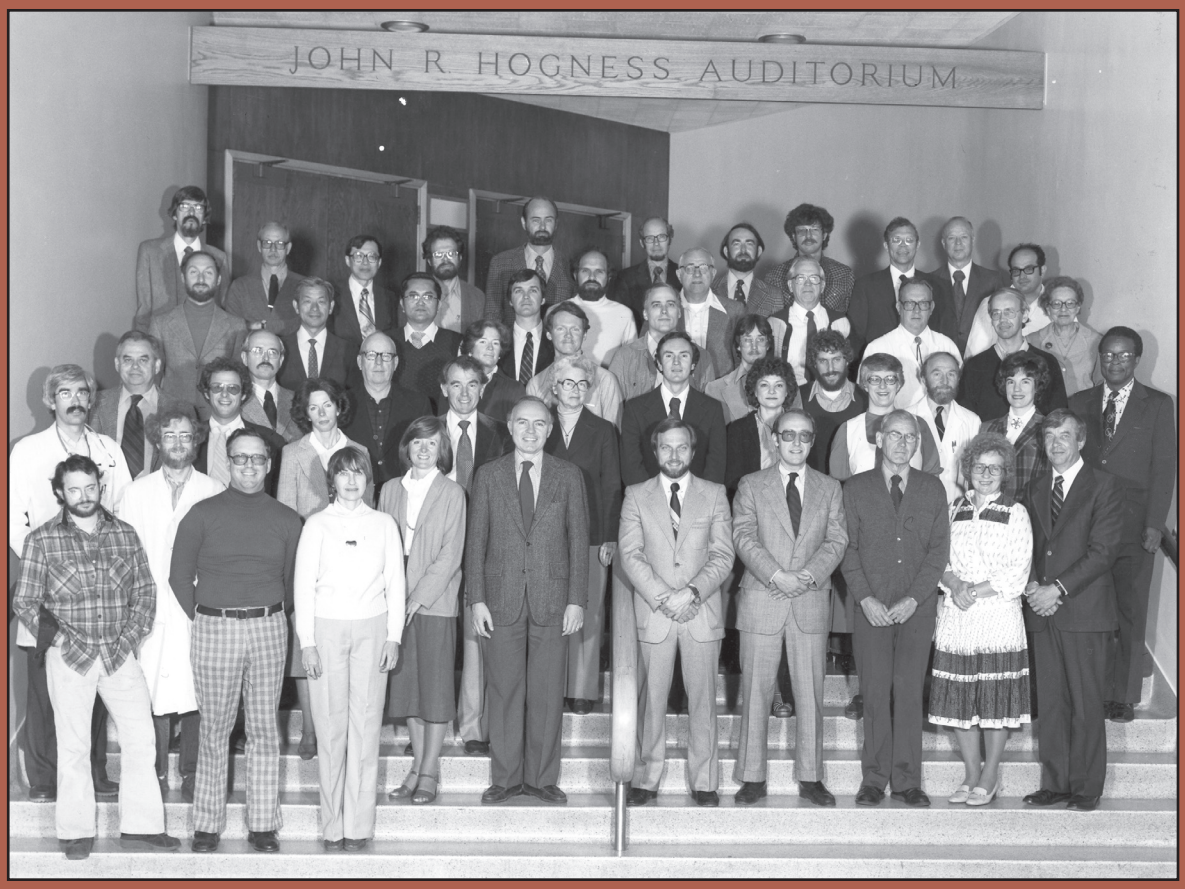
Antarctic ozone hole discovered

Asarco shuts down Tacoma smelter

Local burning regulations

Leaded gas phased out as region meets lead standards

1989 - Exxon Valdez oil spill in Prince William Sound's Bligh Reef



SPHCM faculty, 1980

1980 - Early years of the Harborview Occupational Medicine Clinic

1981 - Jim Woods, Dave Eaton and others form Pacific Northwest Society of Toxicology (PANWAT)

The Soul Catcher, a Northwest Indian symbol for physical and spiritual well-being, was designed in 1981 by Marvin Oliver. This became the logo for the School of Public Health and Community Medicine.

Our Role

President Carter signs the Love Canal bill

1982 - First UW undergraduate course in toxicology called “Toxic Chemicals in the Environment”

1982 - Gilbert Omenn hired as Chair of DEH, then becomes Dean of SPHCM. Omenn champions the growth of Toxicology

EH recruits Sheldon Murphy as new Chair

1986 - DEH becomes 1 of 4 major Universities to receive an National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) Superfund Basic Research Grant

1987 - Occupational and Environmental Medicine Program becomes a hybrid between Dept. of Medicine and DEH

UW Tuition is $577 per quarter incl. fees (1987)

1980s

Enrollments began to grow again in the 1990s, leading the department in 1997 to cap the total number of students in the major at 50. The core pathway still emphasized the biological aspects of protecting human health: control of microbes and other vectors in food, water, and waste. The program also includes air pollution; hazardous exposures in occupational and industrial settings; and the legal and administrative framework that environmental health practitioners encounter.

An Environmental Health minor available to all UW undergraduates was also approved. And for the first time since 1962, the department received substantial new funding from the central UW administration for undergraduate teaching.

1990s

Milestones

Olympic Pipeline accident, Bellingham, WA, 1999

1996 - Food Quality Protection Act

World Population at 5.8 billion people

Federal transportation funding shifts toward mass transit

1998 - Explosion and fire at the Equilon Puget Sound Refinery in Anacortes kill six refinery workers

Growth Management Act

Clean Air Act reauthorized

1999 - Department of Interior lists nine salmon runs as Endangered Species

Olympic Pipe Line accident in Bellingham kills three youths

Bill Clinton makes a point at the WTO, December 1999

1993 - General health and safety standard for WA State industries extended to Agriculture

1996 - President Bill Clinton is elected and Governor Gary Locke is elected in Washington State.

1996 - Northwest Environmental Business Council

1998 - Patty Murray wins re-election to US Senate

Sound Transit formed

1999 - World Trade Organization (WTO) ministerial meeting held in Seattle

Mayor Schell reacts to protests and vandalism against the WTO by declaring a state of emergency on November 30th

Our Role

EH graduate students prepare samples

1991 - Gerald van Belle named Chair of Environmental Health after the untimely death of Sheldon Murphy.

1995 - First PhD student graduated, Kay Teschke

UW tuition is $1122 per quarter incl. fees (1997)

Northwest Particulate Matter (NWPM) Center funded at UW

Tim Larson wins award for wood smoke monitoring

1997 - NIOSH first funds Industrial Hygiene graduate students at the Department of Environmental Health

Currently, our Environmental Health undergraduate students participate in an enhanced laboratory analysis sequence that provides them a yearlong introduction to the methods and testing equipment used by specialists in the field. Our graduate programs are working to maintain their relevance and efficiency by restructuring program requirements, reconfiguring courses, and offering new courses.

We expect to continue progress in research and teaching while extending the scope and impact of our service work. There are clear opportunities for increasing dialogue with Washington employers and business organizations. We wish to thank those who have supported these initiatives along the way, and we would like to invite you to become engaged with our department as we continue into the future.

2000s

Milestones

Traffic in the Seattle area

2001 - World Trade Center attacks; bioterrorism concerns

2006 - US outbreak of E. Coli from Spinach

2007 - Number of deaths from Mad Cow Disease reach 165 in Great Britain

Current estimated world population is 6.7 billion

People and Collaborators

Seattle skyline at sunset

2000 Sound Transit's *Sounder* commuter trains began running between Tacoma and Seattle

2004 - DEOHS receives a $30 million grant to study the connection between air pollution and cardiovascular disease. The grant is the largest ever awarded by the EPA for scientific research. Dr. Joel Kaufman is the principal investigator.

2005 - Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels launched the US Mayors Climate Protection Agreement in response to the Kyoto Protocol

Our Role

Chris Diangco, first recipient of the Jack Hatlen Scholarship, pictured with Hatlen, 2007

2000 - David Kalman named Chair of Environmental Health

2003 - Environmental Health Department name changed to “Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences” (DEOHS)

2007 - Restructuring of Industrial Hygiene and Safety program –changed to “Occupational and Environmental Exposure Sciences”

DEOHS is part of a new National Children’s Health Study, a first-of-its kind, tracking children’s health from womb to adulthood

UW tuition is $2128 per quarter, including fees