



### Contaminated Sites

A contaminated site is any piece of land where contaminants, usually chemicals but could include micro organisms, radioactive materials or minerals, are present above normal or back-ground levels. They pose a serious risk to public health and the environment. The state policy (under the *Environment Protection Act 1970*) which governs this area is the *State Environment Protection Policy (Prevention & Management of Contamination of Land)*, June 2002.

Any commercial, industrial, mining or agricultural site has the potential to be contaminated. The likelihood is linked to historical activities that have occurred at the site and current practices and operations. Contamination is often discovered as a consequence to changes in land use, or redevelopment of a premise to a more sensitive land use, such as from industrial to residential.

If contamination is causing or poses a threat to public health onsite, or has the potential to migrate offsite, steps must be taken immediately to protect public health and mitigate potential offsite effects.

Should earthworks on site expose strange coloured or textured soil, underground tanks or odorous soil, you must seek expert advice on how to deal with the material onsite and dispose of excess materials. The first step is to obtain the services of a competent and EPA approved professional with expertise in land and soil contamination and assessment.

### Managing Contaminated Sites

Ensure that any potentially contaminated areas are audited and identified. Before you undertake earthworks, involving potentially contaminated land, you should organise for a preliminary audit to be carried out to determine the nature of any contamination, and ensure that potentially contaminated soil is disposed of properly.

Only personnel approved by EPA Victoria with appropriate qualifications and experience, should be used to undertake the audit. Identify all activities and handling operations which could cause land to become contaminated.

# Environmental Guidelines



## Please Note

Pay special attention to the design, quality and conditions of Underground Petroleum Storage Systems (UPSSs), as they can sometimes leak and contaminate land and water in the area.

## Further Information



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**Note: This Good Practice Guideline is not a complete statement of law relevant to this topic.  
Further legal advice must be sought if complete information is required.**