

GPG 26 Potentially Contaminated Sites



Governing Legislation and Standards:

All manufacturing businesses.

Environment Protection Act 1970

National Environment Protection (Assessment of Site contamination) Measure 1999, National Environment Protection Council

Minister's Direction, Potentially Contaminated Land, 1992, available from EPA



Summary Information:

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 background levels and pose a risk to the public or environment.

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.

Contamination is often discovered as a consequence to changes in land use, or redevelopment of a premises, to a more sensitive land use, such as from industrial to residential.

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

Should earthworks on site expose strange coloured or textured soil, underground tanks or odorous soil, then you must seek expert advice on how to deal with the material on site and dispose of excess materials.

The first step is to obtain the services of a competent and EPA approved professional with expertise in land contamination, to undertake a preliminary assessment of your site.



Further Help:

Environment Protection Authority, tel: 9695 2722 internet: www.epa.vic.gov.au

GPG 26



Good Practice Risk Control:

- 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. Pay special attention to the security of underground storage tanks and lines.