

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ASSESSMENT AND VALIDATION OF SITES CONTAINING ABOVE GROUND OR UNDERGROUND FUEL STORAGE TANKS

The Australian and New Zealand Guidelines for the Assessment and Management of Contaminated Sites (ANZECC/NHMRC June 1992) and the ACT Environment Protection Authority, Contaminated Sites Environment Protection Policy (Contaminated Sites EPP) 2009 list service stations, oil production, and oil storage as specific industries and land uses which have been associated with site contamination. The exact level of site contamination associated with any land use will depend on the standard of management practised at that site.

All sites known to have had above ground or underground fuel storage tanks are considered to be potentially contaminated until investigated and assessed and shown to be free of contamination.

Where facilities are to be removed each site must be assessed in accordance with the following legislation and guidelines, which have been endorsed for use in the ACT by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA):

- > *Environment Protection Act 1997* (the Act) and Environment Protection Regulation 2005
- > ACT EPA, ACT Environmental Guidelines for Service Station Sites and Hydrocarbon Storage, January 2014
- > ACT EPA, Contaminated Sites Environment Protection Policy, 2009
- > NEPC, Assessment of Site Contamination, National Environment Protection Measure, December 1999 as amended May 2013 (ASC NEPM 2013)
- > NSW EPA 2011, Guidelines for Consultants Reporting on Contaminated Sites

This is not an exhaustive list, for more details of guidelines endorsed for use in the ACT refer to the Contaminated Sites EPP.

The consultant/contractor(s) conducting the works must obtain all necessary approvals and endorsements from Access Canberra prior to works commencing.

The person(s) commissioning the assessment may also be required to engage an EPA approved independent environmental auditor (contaminated sites) to assess the consultant's proposed sampling, assessment, remediation and validation procedures.

For smaller scale facilities (ie. 1-2 tanks) the requirement to engage an auditor is normally waived and the EPA will undertake the audit of the consultant's report. This requirement will generally be detailed in the planning approval for the works. Should gross contamination be detected during the works, however, the EPA may then require that an auditor be engaged – should the EPA require an independent audit this audit would be considered a statutory audit under the Act and will result in the site being placed on the Register of contaminated sites. In these cases the auditor is required under Section 76A of the Act to notify the EPA, in writing, within seven working days of their engagement to undertake the audit.

Note: Assessment of groundwater conditions at a site being independently audited is required in all cases with the establishment of a minimum of three groundwater bores to determine the status of the groundwater. The environmental consultant must contact the EPA to discuss the need for groundwater assessment at sites which are not independently audited.

Assessment and audit reports into the site's suitability for its proposed and permitted uses must be prepared in general accordance with the guidelines listed above. A copy of the consultant's final assessment report or the auditor's draft site audit statement and report must be forwarded to the EPA for review and/or endorsement within 15 working days of completion of the report.

For more information

Contact the Environment Protection Authority by calling Access Canberra on 13 22 81.

Go to www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au for more information relating to Environment Protection Authority.

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