

## DECOMMISSIONING, ASSESSMENT AND AUDIT 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 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.

There are specific requirements relating to the assessment, remediation, validation and audit of service station sites in the ACT. These requirements are detailed in Information Sheet 2 of the contaminated sites series. This information sheet can be obtained by contacting Access Canberra on 13 22 81 or found on the Access Canberra website at [www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au](http://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au)

There are three sections within Access Canberra principally involved when decommissioning fuel storage facilities in the ACT:

- > Under the *Planning and Development Act 2007* the removal of fuel tanks constitutes 'development' and development approval is required.
- > Access Canberra administers the *Dangerous Substances Act 2004* and must approve the method of abandonment.
- > **Environment Protection Authority** administers the contaminated land provisions of the Environment Protection Act 1997. Where fuel storage facilities are to be decommissioned the tank(s) and associated infrastructure must be removed and the immediate site assessed, remediated and in some cases independently audited in accordance with the following guidelines endorsed for use in the ACT by the EPA:
  - 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) and
  - 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 Contaminated Sites EPP can be obtained by contacting Access Canberra on 13 22 81 or at [www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au](http://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au)

NOTE: In accordance with the ACT Environmental Guidelines for Service Station Sites and Hydrocarbon Storage 'All decommissioned tanks must be removed unless there are specific operational or structural reasons as to why they must remain. These reasons must be outlined or substantiated by an experienced and competent person. The EPA must be notified in writing of the decommissioning procedure within 28 days of abandonment of a tank or underground storage system.'

EPA approval must be issued prior to the in-situ abandonment of underground fuel storage tanks.

The assessment of contaminated sites is a specialist field and qualified environmental consultants **must** be engaged to undertake the assessment component of the works.

The procedures for the proposed works **must** be clearly detailed in the Development Application. Clear working drawings must be submitted which detail the location and size of the tanks and associated facilities (i.e. vent pipes, lines and bowsers) within the site and any soil stockpile and landfarm areas. The application must also clearly detail the environmental controls (i.e. sediment & erosion, leachate, dust, noise, and odour) and occupational health and safety procedures for the works.

There are specific requirements relating to the beneficial reuse or disposal of contaminated soil in the ACT. These are detailed in – Contaminated Sites Information Sheet 4, which can be obtained by contacting Access Canberra on 13 22 81 or at [www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au](http://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au)

The consultant/contractor(s) conducting the works must obtain all necessary approvals and endorsements from the relevant ACT Government agencies prior to works commencing.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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

Go to [www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au](http://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au) for more information relating to the Environment Protection Authority.

Last updated October 2016