

What is an Environmental Site Assessment?

An Environmental Site Assessment is a detailed investigation of a site which is designed to determine whether there has been any potentially contaminating land uses at the site, probable contaminants and the location of any contamination. There are two stages involved with a Site Assessment:

Preliminary Site Investigation (PSI) is an investigation consisting of a desktop study that looks into the site history, a detailed site inspection and in some circumstances, limited sampling. The scope of the PSI will indicate if contamination is present, or likely to be present. If so, a Detailed Site Investigation will be required.

Detailed Site Investigation (DSI) builds on the PSI and involves a comprehensive sampling program to confirm the extent, nature and concentrations of the contamination as well as establishing the lateral and vertical distribution of the contamination. A detailed report will provide an assessment on the land based on the laboratory results and the sites history

Property Due Diligence

In an age of increasing liability and tighter environmental regulation, environmental due diligence on all types of property, particularly industrial, is now essential. The provisions of the Victorian Environment Protection Act 1970 tend to have the effect that the occupier will generally bear liability for contamination. So when land ownership changes occur, the environmental liabilities transfer to the new owner.

Prior to the acquisition of any property, as part of your due diligence, an environmental assessment should be considered as it may save you in the long run.

If you are selling a property, in order to maximize your return from the sale, an environmental assessment will minimize the environmental and financial risks a purchaser is asked to accept in the contract of sale.

If you have a tight time frame or budget, Ground Science can talk you through your options and develop an assessment approach which will allow you to make an informed decision.

Environmental Site Assessments are generally required when:

- As part of a land sale
- Re-zoning of the land through planning authorities
- Development Application in-which a change to a more sensitive land use is proposed
- When environmental/health authorities have reason to believe activities on-site could present risks to both environmental and human health impacts
- An incident or spill occurs that has potential environmental and human health impacts



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Children's Services Soil Assessments

The Department of Education and Early Childhood requires an assessment of soil at all sites proposed for use as a children's service, and in some cases, sites which are already in use as a children's services. Soil assessment is part of the process of considering whether the proposed location of the children's service is considered suitable under section 10 of the *Children's Services Act 1996*.

Soil assessment may be required when children will have or currently have access to the soils at that service. As a minimal, a preliminary investigation is required for existing licensed children's services, when meeting the following criteria:

- Earthworks or excavations exceeding 1m in depth
- Alterations to the existing buildings or extensions of the land boundaries
- The alteration or extension will be used for the children's outdoor play area
- No soil assessment has been undertaken previously

Ground Science has undertaken many children service soil assessments all over Victoria and can guide you through the complete soil assessment process.

Contaminated Soil Testing for Off-Site Disposal

Prior to the off-site disposal of soils, it is a requirement of the EPA – Victoria that the soils be classified as either:

- Fill Material
- Category C – Contaminated Soil (low level)
- Category B – Contaminated Soil
- Category A – Contaminated Soil (high level)

Soils which are categorised into either Category C or Category B contaminated soil will require disposal as Prescribed Waste to an appropriately licensed landfill using an EPA Transport certificate system, unless an exemption is issued. Soils which are categorized as Category A contaminated soil will require treatment to reduce or control the hazard before meeting acceptance criteria for disposal at an appropriate EPA licensed landfill.

Ground Science has an in-depth knowledge of the requirements for sampling and classifying for off-site disposal of soils. Ground Science has continually implemented sampling and analysis strategies which have successfully and justifiably reduced the category of soil classification, saving the client thousands of dollars in disposal fees.

Please contact our Environmental specialist **Mr Jared Hammett** on **9464 4617** for any questions or to organise a quote.

We operate all throughout metro Melbourne and rural Victoria



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