

Pre-Construction Hazardous Waste Evaluations Can Save Time and Money

The discovery of unexpected hazardous wastes can derail any “on time/on budget” construction project schedule. Historical uses - as a service station, dry cleaner, or industrial facility - typically results in contaminated soil and groundwater at construction sites. State and federal regulations require special precautions at contaminated sites to protect worker health and safety and to minimize the potential spread of hazardous materials.

Thinking ahead can alleviate unexpected surprises.

A pre-construction hazardous waste evaluation can identify known or suspected contamination during the planning stages of a project. Often this work can be conducted in tandem with pre-construction soil borings to save time and money.

The findings can be used to:

- >Evaluate the need for contaminant resistant construction materials
- >Develop a site-specific health and safety plan (if the HAZWOPER standard applies)
- >Inform potential contractors of additional costs and worker training
- >Secure reimbursement from state underground storage tank (UST) funds
- >Maximize opportunity for special state funds for third party expenses
- >Obtain pre-approval to handle contaminated soil and groundwater

The nuts and bolts:

A pre-construction hazardous waste evaluation reviews all available data to determine whether there is contamination on or near the site. Even if a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment has been completed, a pre-construction hazardous waste evaluation has the added benefit of detailing specific construction related recommendations. On-site screening and possibly soil and water sampling can identify the type and location of contaminants. A pre-construction report summarizes the evaluation and determines whether construction activities will be regulated under OSHA.

If you are planning construction at a site with an industrial past, or if your project will include many acres with unknown history - like a sewer or water line installation - you may want to seriously consider a pre-construction hazardous waste evaluation. Much of the assessment can be coupled with other site work in order to minimize costs.

Environmental Compliance Services, Inc. (ECS) performs pre-construction hazardous waste evaluations and is a full-service environmental consulting firm.

To learn more, please call (800) 789-3530 or visit www.ecsconsult.com.