



## PHASE I, II & III ENVIRONMENTAL SITE ASSESSMENTS

With the passage of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) in 1980, owners and purchasers of properties and businesses may be placed in a serious liability situation if a purchased property is contaminated with toxic or hazardous substances.

An Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) provides the buyer, seller, developer and the financial institution with the information necessary to evaluate and negotiate property acquisitions from a position of strength. A corporation, banker, lawyer, realtor or investor who becomes more knowledgeable in assessing and minimizing the risks will be more comfortable with the real estate transaction and have more protection against personal or corporate liability.

### Phase I Environmental Site Assessment

The purpose of a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) is to determine the environmental condition of the property and identify any possible environmental contamination. It is a detailed report that researches and assesses a property's current and historical environmental uses.

A Phase I ESA includes, but is not limited to, on-site inspection, interviews, regulatory database reviews, and non-invasive examination that looks for:

- potential soil contamination
- groundwater and surface water quality
- asbestos, lead or mold containing building materials
- hazardous materials storage
- potential sources of hydrocarbon contaminants
- potential sources of chemical residues
- potential sources of dead vegetation
- an inventory of hazardous substances stored / used on site
- a cursory review of previous studies and permits

# Phase II and III

## Phase II Environmental Site Assessment

A Phase II ESA is undertaken when a Phase I ESA determines a likelihood of site contamination. The purpose is to analyze for qualitative and quantitative values of various contaminants.

It includes collecting in-situ samples of soil, hydrocarbons, groundwater, and building materials. A Phase II ESA may also include groundwater monitoring, fate and transport studies, 3-D modeling, and the design of feasibility studies for remediation and remedial plan.

The most frequent substances tested are petroleum hydrocarbons, heavy metals, pesticides, solvents, asbestos, and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs).



## Phase III Environmental Site Assessment

A Phase III ESA is remediation of a contaminated site(s). It consists of the development and implementation of a Risk-Based Remediation Action Plan, with consideration for and assessment of:

- alternative cleanup methods
- cost/benefit analysis
- logistics