

EPA CONTAMINATED SITE INFORMATION SYSTEMS PRIORITY SITES REGISTER

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EPA has established the Priority Sites Register which lists all sites for which EPA requires action relating to site contamination. This action may include clean-up, monitoring and/or management.

BACKGROUND

EPA has a key responsibility in protecting beneficial uses of land. Many of these uses are regulated or controlled through a range of measures to prevent contamination of land and groundwater.

Land contaminated by former waste disposal, industrial and similar activities is frequently discovered during changes to land use – for example, from industrial to residential use. In most cases these can be managed at the time that the change of land use occurs.

Some sites however, present an unacceptable risk to human health or to the environment and must be dealt with as a priority. Such sites are typically subject to clean-up and/or management under EPA directions.

The Environmental Audit System has also been established by EPA as an authoritative means by which planning authorities, site owners, purchasers and others are provided assurance regarding the condition of a site and its suitability for use, frequently in the context of site redevelopment.

These systems are designed to assist in management of contaminated sites. Importantly, they also provide information and assurance to the public regarding the condition of certain sites.

WHAT ARE PRIORITY SITES?

Priority Sites are sites for which EPA has issued a Clean-up Notice pursuant to section 62A, or a Pollution Abatement Notice pursuant to section 31A or 31B (relevant to land and/or groundwater) of the *Environment Protection Act 1970* ('the Act'). Typically these are sites where pollution of land and/or groundwater presents an unacceptable risk to human health or to the environment.

The condition of these sites is not compatible with the current or approved use of the site without active management to reduce the risk to human health and the environment. Such management can include clean-up, monitoring and/or institutional controls.

* This publication replaces publication 735 issued December 2000

WHAT IS THE PRIORITY SITES REGISTER?

EPA maintains the Priority Sites Register as a listing of all Priority Sites. The register is made available to the public.

The Priority Sites Register is not a listing of all contaminated sites in Victoria, nor is it a list of all contaminated sites of which EPA has knowledge.

The Priority Sites Register does not list sites managed by voluntary agreements or sites subject to management by planning controls (eg. sites managed in accordance with section 173 agreement under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*). Land purchasers should be aware of these limitations and make their own enquiries.

Listing sites on the Priority Sites Register

A site is listed on the Priority Sites Register when EPA issues a Clean-up Notice or a Pollution Abatement Notice (relevant to land and groundwater). A notice is a means by which EPA formalises requirements to manage pollution.

Notice conditions will often include a requirement that an environmental auditor, who is appointed under section 57 of the Act, issues a Certificate or Statement of Environmental Audit for the site in accordance with section 57AA of the Act.

Removing sites from the Priority Sites Register

Sites are removed from the Priority Sites Register once all conditions of a Notice have been complied with. This is formalised through a Notice of Revocation pursuant to section 60B of the Act.

ACCESS TO THE PRIORITY SITES REGISTER

Information contained in the Priority Sites Register may be sought by a range of people including landowners, prospective purchasers, conveyancers, financiers, planners, assessors and auditors.

The Priority Sites Register may be accessed via:

- LANDATA, an information broker specialising in providing convenient and low cost access to a wide range of site information, including aerial photography, survey information, historical plans and private title searches. Contact details are as follows:

14/570 Bourke Street

MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Tel: 8636 2456

Fax: 8636 2494 or 8636 2468

E-mail: landata.online@nre.vic.gov.au

Internet site: www.land.vic.gov.au

Or,

- Anstat, a property information company. Anstat is the official publisher of legislation for Victorian government and provides convenient and low cost on-line access to property information. Contact details are as follows:

224 Normanby Road

SOUTHBANK VIC 3006

Tel: 9278 1172

Fax: 9278 1167

E-mail: oscar@anstat.com.au

Internet site: www.anstat.com.au

Additional information about any site listed on the Priority Sites Register is available from EPA offices.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Additional information is available from:

EPA Information Centre

Herald and Weekly Times Tower
40 City Road, Southbank 3006
Tel: 03 9695 2722 Fax: 03 9695 2710

Gippsland

7 Church Street, Traralgon 3844
Tel: 03 5176 1744 Fax: 03 5174 7851

North-East

24 Ely Street, Wangaratta 3677
Tel: 03 5721 7277 Fax: 03 5721 2121

North-West

43 Williamson Street, Bendigo 3550
Tel: 03 5442 4393 Fax: 03 5443 6555

South Metro

45 Princes Highway, Dandenong 3175
Tel: 03 9794 0677 Fax: 03 9794 5188

South-West

Cnr Lt Malop and Fenwick Streets,
Geelong 3220
Tel: 03 5226 4825 Fax: 03 5226 4632

EPA internet site

www.epa.vic.gov.au