
ENVIRONMENTAL Fact Sheet



29 Hazen Drive, Concord, New Hampshire 03301 • (603) 271-3503 • www.des.nh.gov

WMD-REM-9

2019

Contaminated Site Closure: A Property Owner's Guide

What is Site Closure?

A contaminated site is closed when the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) determines that regulatory action is no longer necessary because all corrective action goals have been achieved. Contaminated **site** closure differs from **facility** closure. Facilities such as underground storage tanks (USTs) and solid waste landfills are closed in order to eliminate the threat of future contamination or to address changes in regulatory standards. These facilities are also managed as contaminated sites when contamination is discovered.

Site Closure Goals

- Source: The source of contamination must be eliminated.
- On-Site Dissolved Contamination: Dissolved contamination levels in groundwater must be below Ambient Groundwater Quality Standards (AGQS), and contaminated soil direct contact risks must be eliminated.
- Off-Site Impact: Dissolved contamination levels within the Groundwater Management Zone (GMZ) must be below AGQS.

Documentation Required for Site Closure

Documentation depends largely on the current Conceptual Model (see definition below). Examples of submittals used to demonstrate that a contaminated site is ready for closure are:

1. Conceptual model – a comprehensive summary, which explains contaminant distribution and fate in terms of geology, groundwater hydraulics and source areas.
2. Source mitigation report, soil sampling results and tank closure report.
3. Site characterization and investigation reports.
4. Remedial Action Plan (RAP) implementation and performance reports.
5. Groundwater permit status reports and monitoring results demonstrating GMZ compliance.
6. Groundwater analytical results, which demonstrate compliance with AGQS. Timing between rounds depends upon the conceptual model.

A NHDES Certificate of No Further Action letter can be issued if:

1. All human health hazards associated with direct exposure to contaminants through dermal, ingestion and inhalation have been eliminated.
2. All necessary activity and use restrictions have been implemented.
3. All sources of groundwater contamination have been eliminated.
4. All on-site and off-site dissolved contamination levels meet groundwater quality criteria as specified in Env-Or 603.01.
5. All recorded release of recordation notices are on file with the department as required by Env-Or 607.09.
6. All penalty(ies) or fine(s) issued under RSA: 146-A, 146-C, 147-A, 485-C have been paid; and all fees and costs due under RSA 147-F have been paid.

A NHDES Certificate of No Further Action letter means:

- Additional investigation and remedial measures are not required at this time.
- NHDES will remove this site from our active project list and close the regulatory site file.
- The site conditions meet the criteria contained in New Hampshire Code of Administrative Rules Env-Or 600.
- NHDES reserves the right to require additional investigations, remedial measures or groundwater monitoring if further information indicating the need for such work is received.

Footnotes

- A contaminated site includes those contaminated with petroleum and hazardous wastes from: leaking underground or aboveground storage tank sites; hazardous waste sites; and old unlined landfills.
- The groundwater management zone is an area delineated by boundaries within which contaminated groundwater is contained and restored to drinking water standards by remedial actions and natural processes.
- Ambient groundwater quality standards are a combination of federal and state drinking water standards.

Disclaimer: The information contained in this fact sheet is current as of October 7, 2019. Statutory or regulatory changes that may occur after October 7, 2019, may cause part or all of this information to be invalid. If there are any questions concerning the status of the information, please contact NHDES by calling 271-3899.