

Environmental Cleanup Acronyms and Terminology

The acronyms and terminology included on this list are generic definitions intended to help your understanding when dealing with the cleanup process. Some of these terms are more specifically defined in various regulations.

Administrative:

DATCP	Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
DNR	Department of Natural Resources
RP	Responsible Person
ACCP	Agricultural Chemical Cleanup Program - reimbursement program established by s. 94.73, Stats. and administered under ATCP 35, Wisconsin Administrative Code.
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding - agreement between the DNR and DATCP which establishes DATCP as the lead agency responsible for corrective actions involving agricultural chemicals.
BMP	Best Management Practices - recommendations by UW Extension that are used as the basis for establishing land application rates of fertilizer-contaminated soil.
WPDES	Wisconsin Pollution Discharge Elimination System - establishes criteria and permitting to control discharges of contaminants to surface water (generally via storm sewers).
PAL	Preventive Action Limit - a concentration level in groundwater, defined for certain contaminants in NR140, Wisconsin Administration Code, at which water users should be warned of potentially deteriorating water quality. These levels are intended to serve as an early warning and should initiate an investigation into the cause so that remedial measures can be taken before groundwater becomes unusable for drinking.
ES	Enforcement Standard - a concentration level in groundwater greater than the PAL, at which drinking is no longer recommended.

Environmental Administrative Codes:

NR140	Establishes groundwater quality standards and required responses when the standards are exceeded.
NR141	Establishes requirements for groundwater monitoring well construction.
NR149	Establishes Wisconsin's program to certify analytical laboratories that generate environmental data.
NR500	Regulates the storage, transportation, treatment and disposal of non-hazardous solid waste.
NR600	Regulates the management and definition of hazardous wastes (a few agricultural chemicals may require handling as hazardous wastes).
NR700	Regulates the investigation and remediation of environmental contamination.

Cleanup Terminology:

RI	Remedial Investigation - the environmental evaluation initiated when a suspected or confirmed discharge is reported.
HSA	Hollow-stemmed augers - used with rotary drill rigs to advance boreholes in soil for purposes of soil sample collecting and monitoring well installation.
Split Spoon Sampler	A narrow (2-inch diameter) steel tube which can retrieve a relatively undisturbed sample when driven into soil or soft rock by a drill rig.
Geoprobe/ Hydropunch	A subsurface sampling device which drives a narrow (1-1/4 inch diameter) steel shaft to the desired depth using a hydraulic ram. It is intended for taking soil or groundwater samples at depths typically less than 30 feet in soils which do not contain excessive cobbles or coarse gravel.
Monitoring Well (MW)	A well which is screened to intersect the uppermost saturated limit of an aquifer. Construction is typically 2 - inch diameter with a 10-15 foot slotted screen. Water table wells are intended to provide information on ground water quality and physical characteristics of the aquifer(s) nearest the ground surface.
Piezometer	A monitoring well that is screened in a deeper portion of an aquifer.
Well nest	A combination of a monitoring well and at least one piezometer.

Laboratory / Analytical Terminology:

GC	Gas Chromatography - a common technique for determining the concentrations of organic chemicals, including pesticides, in environmental samples.
GC/MS	Gas Chromatography / Mass Spectroscopy - a combined laboratory technique which enhances identification of individual organic compounds using unique light-emitting properties when the compounds are ignited.
MDL	Method Detection Limit
PQL	Practical Quantitation Limit
LOQ	Limit of Quantitation
ND	Not Detected above the MDL concentration
AEP	Acid Extractable Pesticides (includes 2,4-D, Dicamba, etc.)
NEP	Neutral or Base Neutral Extractable Pesticides (includes Atrazine, Alachlor, Cyanazine, Metolachlor, etc.)
IA	Immunoassay - analytical technique using specific enzymes to quantify organic chemicals, including some pesticides, in soil and water samples. This is generally a lower cost, chemical specific method.
QA/QC	Quality Assurance / Quality Control - laboratory procedures that should accompany analyses to insure accuracy and precision of results.

Concentration

Units	Measures of the amount of contaminants in soil and water samples:
ppm	Parts per million
mg/l	Milligrams per liter (a liquid equivalent of ppm)
mg/kg	Milligrams per kilogram (a dry equivalent of ppm)
ppb	Parts per billion
ug/l	Micrograms per liter (a liquid equivalent of ppb)
ug/kg	Micrograms per kilogram (a dry equivalent of ppb)

Terminology Commonly Related to Petroleum Cleanup:

PECFA	The reimbursement fund administered by the Department of Commerce for clean up of petroleum contamination. The DNR provides the technical oversight of all petroleum cleanup issues.
GRO	Gasoline Range Organics (non-compound specific analytical method)
DRO	Diesel Range Organics (non-compound specific analytical method)
VOCs	Volatile Organic Compounds - a variety of chemicals which comprise a major portion of petroleum fuels and have a tendency to easily evaporate or enter a gaseous phase.
PID	Photo Ionization Detector - a portable field analytical device that can indicate the presence of a certain range of VOCs present in the vapor phase. This device is not proven for detection of semi-volatile pesticide residues.
UST	Underground Storage Tank
AST	Aboveground Storage Tank
SVE	Soil Vapor Extraction - a process which vents or vacuum extracts, air from unsaturated earth materials. The method can be effective for removal of VOCs but has not been proven to remove significant masses of semi-volatile pesticides from the subsurface.
Sparging	A process which introduces high volumes of air into groundwater in order to transfer VOCs to the vapor phase for enhancing vacuum extraction. Like the related SVE method, sparging has not been demonstrated to be effective for pesticides.