

Development application guidelines

Environmental site screening questionnaire and assessments

What is the purpose of this?

The *environmental site screening questionnaire* is a preliminary test to determine if further study is required for potential site contamination.

A *phase I environmental site assessment* is an assessment of property conducted in accordance with the regulations, by or under the supervision of a qualified person, to determine the likelihood that one or more contaminants have affected any land or water on, in or under the property.

A *phase II environmental site assessment* is an assessment of property conducted in accordance with the regulations, by or under the supervision of a qualified person, to determine the location and concentration of one or more contaminants in the land or water on, in or under the property.

A *record of site condition* is a formal submission, together with all supporting documentation, acknowledged by the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks as certified by a qualified person, indicating the environmental conditions of the site and its suitability for a proposed use.

Who should prepare this?

A qualified person as listed in Ontario Regulation 153/04 (O. Reg. 153/04) Part II “Defined Persons” (see section on “what other resources are available”) must complete these studies.

When is this required?

The completion of the *environmental site screening questionnaire* is required for all development applications and those listed in Appendix B Site Screening Questionnaire of Halton Region’s Protocol for Reviewing Development Applications with Respect to Contaminated and Potentially Contaminated Sites (protocol).

In accordance with the protocol for contaminated sites, the potential of site contamination may trigger the requirement for a *phase I and II environmental site assessment* and a *record of site condition*.

Why do we need this?

The primary objectives of these studies is to determine if site remediation and cleanup is required and ensure that contaminated land is restored to an environmental condition suitable for the proposed land use so that water resources, human health, and ecological health are protected. The *environmental site screening questionnaire, phase I and II environmental site assessment* and a *record of site condition* are intended to:

- provide a history of past uses on the site
- provide information regarding potential contamination on the site
- determine if contamination is present
- determine if a proposed land use is suitable for the site
- determine if site remediation is required
- assist staff with their analysis and report preparation

How should this be prepared?

The *environmental site screening questionnaire* is contained in the Planning Application Pre-consultation Package and listed in Appendix B of the Protocol.

The required contents for a *phase I and II environmental site assessment*, as well as a *record of site condition*, are outlined in Ontario Regulation 153/04.

What else should we know?

In March 2022, Halton Region updated its Protocol for reviewing development applications of contaminated or potentially contaminated sites. The Protocol outlines the steps that must be taken and the conditions that must be met by property owners when submitting a development application.

Halton Region offers a service to assist applicants in completing Environmental Site Assessments for a fee. This service includes a thorough records investigation of Halton Region's Environmental Source Information Database (Environmental Protection GIS Database) to identify potentially contaminated sites in the region.

When a planning application is proposing a change to a more sensitive land use as defined by the Ontario Environmental Protection Act (EPA) and Ontario Regulation 153/04, filing a *record of site condition* is mandatory.

What other resources are available?

Ontario Environmental Protection Act and Ontario Regulation 153/04:

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90e19>

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/040153>

Halton Region - Protocol for Reviewing Development Applications with Respect to Contaminated and Potentially Contaminated Sites:

<https://www.halton.ca/Repository/Protocol-for-Reviewing-Development-Applications-wi>

Halton Region - Contaminated Sites:

<https://www.halton.ca/The-Region/Regional-Planning/Planning-Applications/Contaminated-Sites>

Other documents available on www.ene.gov.on.ca:

- Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks - Records of Site Condition – A Guide on Site Assessment, the Cleanup of Brownfields Sites and the Filing of Records of Site Condition, October 2004
- Ministry of the Environment - Soil, Ground Water and Sediment Standards for Use Under Part XV.1 of the Environmental Protection Act

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