

*PROTOCOL 16*  
**FOR CONTAMINATED SITES**

Determining the Presence and Mobility of  
Nonaqueous Phase Liquids and Odorous Substances

Version 1 Draft 4

Prepared pursuant to Section 64 of the  
*Environmental Management Act*

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Waste Management

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## 1.0 Definitions

The following words, acronyms and expressions used in this protocol are defined in the ministry procedure “Definitions and Acronyms for Contaminated Sites”.

Act	LNAPL
aquatic habitat	mobile DNAPL
dense nonaqueous phase liquid	mobile LNAPL
Director	NAPL
DNAPL	nonaqueous phase liquid
free phase liquid	soil
high water mark	soil surface
light nonaqueous phase liquid	Regulation

## 2.0 Introduction

Schedule 4 of the Contaminated Sites Regulation contains environmental quality standards for nonaqueous phase liquids and odorous substances. For all land uses the Schedule lists those standards as “not present” and in footnotes 5 and 6 further explains that soil must be remediated so that these substances are not present in quantities in excess of those acceptable to a Director.

This protocol provides the Director’s requirements in the context of these footnotes and the standard “not present”. In addition, it describes the circumstances when two types of nonaqueous phase liquids (NAPLs), dense nonaqueous phase liquids (DNAPLs) and light nonaqueous phase liquids (LNAPLs) are considered mobile. Contaminant mobility is a key factor used in site risk classification in the contaminated sites regime.

Scientific background information on methods and assumptions for determining the presence of mobile LNAPL is contained in “Guidance on assessment of light nonaqueous phase liquid mobility for site classification purposes in British Columbia” dated October 9, 2008 by Golder Associates Ltd.

## 3.0 Nonaqueous phase liquids (NAPLs) presence and mobility

For any of the six land uses (agricultural, urban park, residential, commercial, industrial and wildlands) provided in the Regulation, under section 11(1) of the Regulation a site is contaminated if a NAPL is present at the site. The site would be considered remediated under section 17(1) of the Regulation if the NAPL is removed so that NAPL is considered not present. The following subsections indicate when the Director considers light nonaqueous phase liquid (LNAPL) and dense nonaqueous phase liquid (DNAPL) present and not present.

### **3.1 Presence of LNAPL and DNAPL**

#### **3.1.1 When LNAPL is present**

LNAPL is considered present when either of the following occurs at a site:

- a) free phase liquid is found in soil or on the soil surface; or
- b) free phase liquid is found in monitoring wells at an apparent thickness greater than 2 mm.

#### **3.1.2 When DNAPL is present**

DNAPL is considered present when any of the following occur at a site:

- a) free phase liquid is found in soil or on the soil surface;
- b) free phase liquid is found in monitoring wells at an apparent thickness greater than 2 mm; or
- c) individual DNAPL substances are detected in water at concentrations exceeding 1% of their theoretical solubility limit.

### **3.2 Mobility of LNAPL and DNAPL**

Mobile LNAPLs and DNAPLs represent a contaminant source with potential to cause contaminant spreading, undetermined future risks as well as increased complexity, cost, and effort in site remediation. Mobility is therefore a factor which is considered in classifying the risks a site poses to human health and the environment.

Nonaqueous phase liquids are considered mobile when they are present at a site and the following conditions occur.

#### **3.2.1 When LNAPL is mobile**

Under this protocol, LNAPL is defined as mobile when any of following conditions occurs:

- a) LNAPL is present in fractured bedrock;
- b) LNAPL is measured over an area greater than 10 m<sup>2</sup> and at least one of the following apply:
  - Seasonal water table fluctuations exceed 1 m (unless adequate seasonal data are available to determine maximum LNAPL thickness);
  - Hydraulic gradients exceed 0.01 m/m for soil compositions listed in Table 1;
  - Preferential pathways intersect zones containing LNAPL and thicknesses exceed 0.3 m;
- c) Temporal sampling indicates increasing thickness of LNAPL in monitoring wells;

- d) Temporal sampling indicates advancement of LNAPL across a monitoring well network;
- e) LNAPL is measured in monitoring wells over an area greater than 10 m<sup>2</sup> at thicknesses exceeding values indicated in Table 1 below.

**Table 1. LNAPL thickness considered mobile as a function of soil composition<sup>1,2</sup>**

Soil Type	Characteristic Fraction	Percent Fines (silt and clay)	LNAPL Thickness (m)
Coarse sand or gravel	> 20% Coarse sand	< 3	0.03
Coarse sand or gravel	> 20% Coarse sand	3-10	0.05
Medium sand	Medium sand	< 10	0.1
Fine sand	Fine sand	< 10	0.2
Silty sand	Sand	> 10	0.3

**Notes:**

1. Soil compositions are based on the Unified Soil Classification System.
2. Soil compositions falling outside listed soil types must be assigned the soil type that most closely approximates the permeability characteristics of the soil. In the event of uncertainty, a coarser grained soil type must be assigned.

**3.2.2 When DNAPL is mobile**

DNAPL is considered mobile when any of the following occur at a site:

- a) temporal sampling indicates advancement of DNAPL across a monitoring well network;
- b) free phase liquid is found in monitoring wells at an apparent thickness greater than 2 mm; or
- c) individual DNAPL substances are detected in water at concentrations exceeding 10% of their theoretical solubility limit.

**4.0 Odorous substances presence**

Schedule 4 of the Regulation provides “not present” standards for odorous substances for all six land uses specified in section 12(3). Under this Protocol, the Director considers that the substances to which these odorous substance standards apply are those listed in Schedule 11 of the Regulation, under the heading “Generic Numerical Vapour Standards”.

Under section 11(1) of the Regulation a site is contaminated with respect to odorous substances if a substance is present at the site whose concentrations exceed any of

environmental quality standards in Schedule 11 for the applicable land use. As well, the site would be considered remediated under section 17(1) of the Regulation with respect to odorous substances if the substances exceeding the generic numerical vapour standards in Schedule 11 for the applicable land use are remediated to concentrations less than those standards.

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