

Interstate Technology and Regulatory Council

Use of Soil Background Concentrations in Risk Assessment

Information Sheet



Beginning in January 2020, ITRC will start a new team to tackle soil background concentrations! ITRC teams bring together experts from across the country to develop innovative solutions to the most pressing environmental challenges. This team will work on creating a guidance document and training resources for risk assessment staff from state and federal agencies, as well as other interested parties. All environmental and public health professionals are encouraged to join!

Overview

Soil background concentrations are important to consider when conducting human health and ecological risk assessments. Regulators use soil values specific to contaminants commonly found in soil to evaluate whether they will pose risks to people or the environment. These soil values are risk-based values; they are derived using toxicity data, exposure parameters, and chemical specific parameters. For some chemicals, purely risk-based values are below what is found in our soils from natural or ambient sources. In these cases, since it is not common practice to require regulated parties to take action if the amount of the chemical in soil is less than background, regulators often allow soil background values to be used instead of the risk-based values.

The Guidance Will Include:

Summaries of existing guidance and background data studies

Appropriate sampling, analytical, and statistical methods

Geochemical and forensic information

Join the Team!

The Soil Background Team will begin in January 2020! By joining, you will have the opportunity to contribute to the guidance and training resources.

Join now by visiting:

<http://itrcweb.org/Membership/TeamRegistration>

ITRC's Soil Background & Risk Team

There is inconsistency in the way stakeholders define background, use sampling methods, and apply statistical methods in risk assessment. Other sources of valuable information such as geochemical evaluations and forensic methods are not widely used or accepted. Although some states, federal agencies, and other entities have guidance documents regarding this subject, there is no comprehensive up-to-date guidance or a summary of existing resources applicable widely to most sites. The ITRC guidance will provide a useful framework for using soil background concentrations in risk assessment and its application to soil-like materials such as sediments and mining sites.

Team Schedule (subject to change)

Jan 2020: Team formation
Jan-Oct 2020: Draft guidance sections
Apr 2020: In-person Meeting
Fall 2020: In-person Meeting
Nov 2020-Mar 2021: Revise guidance sections
Jan-Mar 2021: Draft training resources
Apr 2021: In-person meeting
Apr-Aug 2021: Finalize guidance document and training resources
Sep 2021: Publish guidance
Oct 2021: Begin holding online training classes and participating in other outreach events

Why Join?

Joining the team allows you to participate in the creation of an innovative guidance document that will be used nationwide! You will be able to share your expertise and stay up-to-date on the latest technical and regulatory developments. ITRC membership gives you access to internal documents and allows you to participate in team meetings and become a future ITRC trainer. Our network of over 1,200 members and 30,000 contacts allows you to network with your peers and gain exposure in your field.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT THE CO-TEAM LEADERS:

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About ITRC

ITRC is a state-led coalition dedicated to reducing barriers to the use of innovative environmental technologies. ITRC represents over 1,200 individuals, across 50 states, working to produce guidance and training on innovative environmental solutions. Bringing together teams of state, federal, tribal, industry, academic, and stakeholder experts, ITRC broadens and deepens technical knowledge and reduces barriers to expedient regulatory approval. Since 1995, the collective success of this coalition has generated huge benefits to the environment, inspired new technical innovations, and saved hundreds of millions of dollars.

ITRC is a program of the Environmental Research Institute of the States, managed by the Environmental Council of the States. This partnership is based on a commitment to protect and improve human health and the environment across the country.



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