

## Seeking help from environmental consultants

October 2024

### Purpose

This fact sheet is designed to provide targeted information on how to find environmental consultants experienced in contaminated sites assessment and management in WA.

### Introduction

The *Contaminated Sites Act 2003* (the Act) was introduced to identify, record, manage and clean up contamination. Under the Act, known or suspected contaminated sites must be reported to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (the department), investigated and, if necessary, cleaned up (remediated).

Investigating and cleaning up contaminated sites is, in most cases, the responsibility of the polluter or current site owner. The department administers and enforces the Act which includes classifying sites (in consultation with the Department of Health) and making information on contaminated sites available to the public.

Landowners, occupiers and property developers may require the services of a competent environmental consultant with the skills and experience to carry out a contaminated site investigation and, if necessary, remediation works.



The department recommends that an environmental consultant experienced in contaminated sites assessment and management is hired in the following situations:

**Land development** – to fulfil an approval under either a planning condition (e.g. subdivision or development approval), or condition within a Ministerial Statement provided under Part IV of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* relating to contamination.

**Requirements under the Act** – when a site has been classified and action is required to investigate or remediate contamination; when the department issues a regulatory notice (investigation, clean-up or hazard abatement notice); or if you are requesting a certificate of contamination audit\* under the Act.

**Buying/selling property** – as part of your pre-purchase due diligence enquiries when you are considering buying a property. This should also be considered when you are entering into commercial lease arrangements.

\*Certificate of contamination audit – statutory 'sign-off' providing government assurance as to the suitability of a site for a particular land use. In most circumstances, it will enable the transfer of liability attached to the site. Submit a Form 3 and \$4,125 to the department.





## Getting quotes

In your request for a quote, ask potential consultants to include the following in their response:

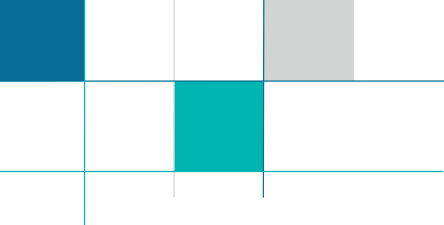
- their understanding of the project and how they propose to carry out the work
- the names, qualifications and experience of the proposed project team
- the consultant's experience working on similar projects and with similar contaminants of potential concern (project summaries, contact details and client references)
- details of the consultant's health and safety procedures and other relevant qualifications pertinent to the intended work
- the consultant's familiarity with the department's contaminated sites guidelines and how they may apply to the site
- the consultant's familiarity with the National Environment Protection (Assessment of Site Contamination) Measure 1999 (ASC NEPM)
- details and qualifications of all subcontractors the consultant intends to use
- detailed cost estimates
- the timing of all phases of the project including a start and finish date
- the consultant's insurance details (including professional indemnity and public liability).

## Check references

Check references for all nominated project team members. You can obtain valuable information about the standard of a consultant's work and their ability to communicate, stay on schedule and keep costs to a minimum, by talking to their clients.

## After you've selected your preferred consultant

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Contaminated site auditors are highly experienced professionals accredited by the department under the Act. Their expert skills include engineering, hydrogeology and environmental chemistry to ecotoxicology and risk assessment. The department's accredited auditors are required to demonstrate a higher level of understanding in both theoretical and practical areas of environmental investigation, assessment, monitoring and remediation.

An auditor may also be engaged to provide



