



# **SURFACE WATER PATHWAY EVALUATION**

a Fact Sheet prepared by the Site Remediation Section  
of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency  
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The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Remediation staff is in the process of preparing guidance documents outlining a risk-based approach for making decisions on remediation sites. The risk-based decision making process provides a streamlined process for making defensible decisions on site-cleanups with regard to protection of human health and the environment.

A guidance document covering topics relating to the risk evaluation due to the surface water exposure pathway is being prepared. A draft outline is attached. The document will include a ready-reference to surface water rules, such as Minnesota Rules chs. 7050 and 7052, a segment of the Statement of Need and Reasonableness that was developed during revisions to Minnesota Rules ch. 7050, and other documents that address ground water discharge to a surface water body.

The guidance document will be organized for easy reference. A two tiered approach to surface water evaluation will be used to establish the required level of effort in evaluating risk to human health and the environment and to determine surface water classification and use of promulgated standards. Spreadsheets are being developed to facilitate the evaluation using analytical data from the site as inputs. Tier I will utilize the lowest of all standards for each parameter for all water bodies except a special classification called Outstanding Resource Value Waters (ORVWs) in order to provide a conservative evaluation of risk posed by the site. With an exception for ORVWs, a Tier I evaluation will provide a quick means of screening surface water standards for all water bodies. Tier 2 provides for a more site-specific evaluation by utilizing individual water quality standards spreadsheets for the four classifications of surface waters presented in Minn. R. 7050.0220, again excluding ORVWs. Directions for use and determining surface water classifications presented in Minn. R. 7050.0220 will be provided in an easily referenced format. Tier 3 will consist of ORVWs, subsistence fishing, unusual exposure routes, endangered species, Great Lakes Initiative, no available criteria and acute situations where MPCA staff from the Environmental Outcomes Division shall be consulted for purposes of developing site-specific strategies for risk evaluation. Due to the site-specific nature of the Tier 3 information, only general information regarding ORVWs will be included in this document..

## **Draft Document Availability**

Individual sections of the RBSE Manual are being released to the public in draft form for comment as they become available. Guidelines to be released include ground water policy, site characterization and sampling requirements, remedy selection, and evaluation of soil to ground water leaching. All draft guidelines are to be used with assistance from Minnesota Pollution Control Agency staff assigned to a specific site.

A photocopy fee of approximately \$0.20 per page will be charged for draft sections of the RBSE Manual in excess of 20 pages. To receive copies of the current and future documents or to be placed on a mailing list to receive notices regarding the guidance development efforts please send written requests to:

Trudy Cramlet  
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency  
Metro District  
520 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, MN 55155-4194  
FAX (651) 296-9707