

The Roster of Approved Professionals

The ministry offers several legal instruments to help its clients – developers, land owners, and others – meet the requirements of the contaminated sites legislation and regulations.

These instruments include:

- Determinations about whether a site is contaminated or not;
- Approvals in Principle of remediation plans;
- Certificates of Compliance with environmental quality standards; and
- Contaminated Soil Relocation Agreements.

Before any of these instruments can be issued, however, an associated site investigation report, remediation plan, and/or confirmation of remediation report must be reviewed.

Milestone date

As of November 1, 2004, any client wishing to have one of these instruments approved on a low or moderate risk site must hire someone from the “roster of approved professionals” to make the application on the client’s behalf.

The ministry can issue any of the above instruments without the need for staff review, if the instrument in question has been recommended by an approved professional.

Who is on the roster?

The roster includes professional biologists, geoscientists, agrologists, and engineers who have the necessary knowledge to assess the validity of the instruments they are recommending.

Why was the use of approved professionals to recommend applications introduced?

The ministry established the roster of approved professionals to not only reduce our backlog, but also improve client service, meet Service Plan targets, and focus ministry resources on high risk sites. By expanding the role of approved professionals on lower risk sites, the ministry has greatly improved its internal processing efficiencies. The faster ministry turnaround enables clients to proceed with development and other activities in a more timely fashion than before, while still complying with contaminated sites legislation.

Among the criteria for membership on the roster are education and work experience, a passing grade on the roster examination, membership in the College of Applied Biology, the British Columbia Institute of Agrologists, or the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of British Columbia, and adequate insurance.

What services do approved professionals provide?

At the request of a proponent, an approved professional will review the background documentation for a site (i.e., the site investigation report, remediation plan, or confirmation of remediation report), make issuance recommendations, and draft the instrument required. He or she will then submit all of these files (the drafted instrument must be in electronic and hard copy form) along with the required application form.

Ministry officials are authorized to sign Determinations, Approvals in Principle, Certificates of Compliance, and Contaminated Soil Relocation Agreements recommended by approved professionals.

Although the technical reports provided in support of the recommendations are not reviewed by the ministry, the draft instrument is subject to minor revisions.

Which applications are eligible for submission by approved professionals?

Approved professionals are expected to make submissions for all low and medium risk contaminated sites.

Details about the types of sites and legal instruments for which the services of an approved professional must be used are defined in our Protocol 6 for Contaminated Sites, "Eligibility of Applications for Review by Approved Professionals".

What does it cost to hire an approved professional?

Fees charged by the ministry for processing submissions from approved professionals are listed in Schedule 3 of the Contaminated Sites Regulation. These fees charged by the ministry are in addition to what the approved professional charges a client for reviewing reports and making a recommendation to the ministry. The ministry is not involved with setting the fees that approved professionals charge their clients.

Operation of the roster

Operating procedures for the roster are described in the ministry's "Procedures for the Roster of Approved Professionals" which is available on our web site:

http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/epdpa/contam_sites/

The Roster Steering Committee manages the roster on the behalf of the ministry. Committee members are appointed by, and report to, the Director of Waste Management. They evaluate the qualifications of applicants; prepare, run, and mark exams; and make appointment recommendations to the Director.

How is the performance of approved professionals monitored?

Quality review program

One in 20 roster submissions is provided a quality review to confirm the accuracy and correctness of the draft instrument submitted and the presence of complete and convincing supporting documentation. These reviews are selected at random to ensure administrative fairness and ensure they are representative of the range of submissions. Quality reviews do not involve field visits or site sampling. In most cases, any deficiencies identified through this quality review program are addressed easily.

Potential for delays in application approval

If the roster reviewers find that the recommendation of an approved professional is not supported by the documentation, or if there are inaccuracies with the draft instrument, issuance of the instrument will be delayed pending resolution by the professional.

Issues are typically addressed either in a meeting with the reviewers and the ministry roster coordinator, or with the preparation of additional explanatory documentation. In rare circumstances, additional site investigation and remediation may be required and additional fees charged to the proponent by the ministry for the review of follow up reports.

Consequences of deficient performance

When a quality review identifies serious issues with an approved professional's submission (e.g., a recommendation that is inconsistent with the information provided), one or more of the following actions might be taken:

- targeted reviews of the approved professional's next submissions;
- additional fees;
- requirement for another approved professional to co-sign future submissions; or
- removal of the individual from the roster.

How can someone become appointed to the roster?

The Director of Waste Management of the Ministry of Environment has the authority to appoint and remove individuals from the Roster of Approved Professionals.

For detailed information about becoming an approved professional, see www.csapsociety.bc.ca/roster_of_ap.htm.

How can you secure the services of an approved professional?

A list of approved professionals is maintained by the Roster Steering Committee (go to www.csapsociety.bc.ca/member_database.htm)

Note

Work is underway to shift the roster of approved professionals to a separate society – Contaminated Sites Approved Professionals Society – that will be more independent of the ministry.

Note: This summary is solely for the convenience of the reader. The current legislation and regulations should be consulted for complete information.

For more information, contact the Environmental Management Branch at site@gov.bc.ca.