

Land contamination and impacts on the water environment consultation

Appendix 3: Remedial targets

SEPA expects that the following broad principles be adhered to when determining the remediation would be either reasonable, having regard to the cost likely to be involved, the benefit that would result, the seriousness of the pollution and the best practicable remediation techniques. Compliance with the hazardous substances and pollution assessment criteria can only be relaxed if measures to achieve the criteria are disproportionately costly or would increase the risks to human health or the quality of the environment as a whole.

SEPA expects the following action:

- Remediation of the sources of groundwater hazardous substances as far as practicable. Sources are considered to include tanks and associated pipework or other underground infrastructure or services containing hazardous substances, free product non-aqueous phase liquids, and soil containing leachable concentrations that could result in groundwater pollution.
- Where inputs of groundwater hazardous and non-hazardous substances are causing groundwater or surface water pollution, source management to break the pollutant linkage will normally be required unless a detailed assessment demonstrates that measures to achieve the objectives are disproportionately costly or would increase the risks to human health or the quality of the environment as a whole.
- Action to prevent deterioration in status. This only applies where deterioration has not yet occurred or to prevent further deterioration of status. This can't be relaxed based on grounds of disproportional cost, risks to human health or the quality of the environment as a whole. This could include action to control inputs from

contaminated soil and/or remedial action within a water body e.g. pump and treat or permeable reactive barrier.

- Where land contamination has already caused a water body to be at less than good status action should be taken to restore it to good status provided this is not infeasible or disproportionately costly. In these cases as much improvement as possible should be sought. This could include soil remediation, groundwater remediation such as bioremediation, permeable reactive barriers or sediment management where this is required to remedy the impact on a surface water. Where the impact is on groundwater resource we will normally expect remedial action to prevent expansion of the plume or an upward trend in concentration at the source and to secure a long term downward trend in contaminant concentration such that the groundwater resource will be restored to good status within an agreed reasonable timescale. Any proposals for remediation that will not meet this objective must be supported by a detailed cost benefit assessment.
- Action should be taken to prevent or remedy impacts on nature sites or drinking water supplies as a priority. Deviation from this requirement will not normally be permitted.