Book reviews

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CONTAMINATED LAND MANAGEMENT: READY REFERENCE

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The identification and management of contaminated land has evolved rapidly as a subject over the last 20 years or so. It requires input from a wide range of disciplines, and consequently there are very diverse sources of information and guidance available for practitioners. Much of this guidance is still highly relevant; some aspects are now outdated, or indeed superseded by the legislative framework that has also evolved over the last 10 years. Practitioners are therefore faced with the difficulty of keeping up with the latest changes while retaining the core knowledge of the recommendations and general good practice presented in these older documents. Contaminated Land Management Ready Reference is a looseleaf binder manual designed to bring together the very diverse sources of information relevant to contaminated land.

This daunting undertaking has been achieved very successfully by presenting all topics as tables, typically two to four pages in length. The manual is broken down into two parts covering site assessment and risk management. These in turn are divided into subsections, starting with the development of conceptual models to represent the environmental processes within and around a site with a view to identifying potentially significant pollution linkages. Section 2 details the process of undertaking a desk study, and very usefully lists the resources available to practitioners. Sections 3 and 4 cover sampling strategies and ground investigation methods respectively. A comprehensive

overview of risk assessment, detailing both generic guidelines and site-specific risk assessment tools, is presented in section 5. This section considers the process of deriving remedial targets for soil and groundwater to protect water resources, and outlines numerical methods to examine the impact of contaminated land on controlled waters. Gas is considered in a similar manner. The second broad category details the process of managing risk. This starts with a classification of risk management processes, followed by a comprehensive overview of actual risk management techniques currently available. These have been broken down into civil engineering or process-based techniques with the tabular format of the manual proving particularly useful in detailing the applicability of each technique. Section 8 describes a framework within which the factors relevant to the selection of a remediation process can be considered. The final section presents further useful information that includes a list of websites that the authors have found to be particularly useful.

The manual works extremely well on a number of levels. As a first-call ready reference it will prove invaluable to practitioners. Similarly, for a more detailed consideration of a particular aspect of contaminated land, the manual's format leads the reader to the location of primary source materials with ease. The manual's publication is timely and in my opinion sets a benchmark for the collation and presentation of information for the very broad subject that is contaminated land management.

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