

# **DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION STATE OF GEORGIA**

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## **ENVIRONMENTAL TESTING BRANCH INTRODUCTION**

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During development, a project alignment may be proposed to go through an area which was once a home to facilities such as service stations, automotive repair shops, automotive bone yards, waste segregation sites, waste piles, landfills, treatment plants and outfalls. Facilities where oil, plastics, chemical, electrical, electronics, photo, printing, paint, plating, metals and paper were/are processed as well as adhesives manufacturing plants, battery shops, locations used for mining, agriculture, medical supply, funeral homes, dry cleaning and other cleaning operations, and older buildings with structural asbestos or other contaminants may also be or have been present along the proposed project alignment. Such areas should be treated as Recognized Environmental Conditions (RECs) and therefore must be thoroughly investigated to determine conclusively that no chemical releases or contamination from Hazardous Waste (HW) or petroleum products from an Underground Storage Tank (UST) or Aboveground Storage Tank (AST) system is present before any right-of-way is purchased. In addition, should a UST system which is active or once used for gasoline, diesel, heating oil, or other chemicals exist within the existing or proposed right-of-way, removal of such UST system must be properly addressed prior to right-of-way acquisition.

A Phase I or II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) is performed by an external prequalified consultant. The District Planning and Programming Coordinator (DPPC) may also perform the internal Phase I ESA site investigation. Upon receipt of the site investigation packages from the DPPC, the Environmental Testing Branch performs the internal Phase II ESA site investigation on any identified RECs for possible contamination. This investigation includes inspecting the site(s), drilling, and analyzing soil and groundwater (if encountered) samples as necessary. A report with recommendations is prepared, along with screening and lab results detailing the extent of any existing contamination from HW and/or UST systems within the Department's proposed and/or existing right-of-way.

The levels of contamination are compared against those established by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Georgia's Environmental Protection Division (EPD). If contamination levels are above the release notification requirements, the Environmental Testing Branch notifies the Georgia's EPD and the property/tank owner with the findings.

The Phase I or II ESA report prepared by a prequalified consultant are reviewed by the Environmental Testing Branch to determine if the consultant's findings and recommendations are acceptable in accordance with established guidelines. All reviews and approvals of consultants' reports, along with any recommendations by the Environmental Testing Branch are transmitted to the appropriate offices.

All courses of action will follow the EPA and Georgia EPD guidelines.