



Green Cleanup Standard Initiative

September 2009 Update

Purpose

During the cleanup of contaminated properties, energy, water, and natural resources are consumed, creating an environmental footprint. Green cleanups strive to consider all environmental effects during a cleanup and incorporate approaches to minimize the environmental footprint. The goal of the green cleanup standard initiative is to develop, through a consensus process, a standard that evaluates and minimizes the environmental footprint from a cleanup. Use of the standard will promote resource efficiencies and technology innovation resulting in measurable improvements to human health, the environment, and communities.

Approach

EPA Region 3 convened a federal and state cross-program workgroup to: (1) identify the potential benefits associated with a national standard for green cleanups; (2) provide recommendations on the process for developing a standard and options for recognition and incentives; (3) develop core elements for a green cleanup standard; and (4) identify a standard developing organization (SDO) to develop a private sector consensus-based standard.

Outcomes

- Identified green cleanup core elements which were subsequently incorporated as objectives within OSWER's cross-program policy and principles for greener cleanups
- Agreed to collaborate with ASTM International to develop a standard for green cleanups through a consensus based process
- Shared EPA's core elements with ASTM International for their consideration in standard development
- Provided ASTM International with materials to kick off the effort at their fall meeting in October 2009

Core Elements of Green Cleanup

- Minimize Total Energy Use and Maximize Use of Renewable Energy
- Minimize Air Pollutants and Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Minimize Water Use and Impacts to Water Resources
- Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle Material and Waste
- Protect Land and Ecosystems

For more information on core elements of green cleanups, see *OSWER's Principles for Greener Cleanups* policy (available at: <http://www.epa.gov/oswer/greencleanups/index.html>).

Benefits

A private sector standard would increase the use of green cleanup approaches by:

- Providing uniform definitions, consistent methods, mutual expectations, and common goals that can be used by all state and federal cleanup programs, making it easier for regulators and the regulated community to implement green cleanups
- Rewarding responsible parties for the extra effort involved in green cleanups, such as public recognition and improved public acceptance of cleanup approaches
- Offering a framework for the new tools being developed to evaluate impacts from cleanups
- Building upon existing state and local government incentives being developed for green cleanups

The Green Cleanup Standard Initiative is sponsored by the U.S. EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response (OSWER) and EPA Region 3's Hazardous Site Cleanup Division and Land & Chemicals Division. The Green Cleanup Standards Workgroup includes representatives from all OSWER cleanup programs, EPA regions, and states.

Project Progress

Research and Planning

- Analyzed similar standards and their development processes
- Finalized a workplan to describe objectives and document activities to move the concept forward
- Developed a communication plan to ensure input from all potential users of the standard
- Developed criteria for evaluating SDOs and interviewed SDOs
- Developed a business model describing the anticipated uses, transactions, users, and benefits associated with applying the standard
- Provided periodic briefings to OSWER and Office of Site Remediation Enforcement (OSRE) senior management and received continued support

Collaboration and Outreach

- Maintained continuous public transparency through project descriptions and updates posted on EPA's CLU-IN Web site (http://www.cluin.org/greenremediation/subtab_b5.cfm)
- Raised national awareness of the standard's potential business value and environmental contributions through Web seminars, conferences, and meeting presentations
- Solicited feedback on the core elements posted on CLU-IN throughout April 2009 and incorporated input
- Coordinated with the National Institute of Standards and Technology and EPA's Standards Executive to ensure compliance with government policies associated with standards development
- Leveraged shared goals, activities, and products of the Association of State and Territorial Solid Waste Management Officials (ASTSWMO) Greener Cleanups Task Force, including the June 2009 release of the ASTSWMO *Incentives for Greener Cleanups* paper
- Coordinated with the Interstate Technology & Regulatory Council's Green and Sustainable Remediation Team to facilitate future leveraging and consistency of national training on green cleanup

Upcoming Activities

- Participate in ASTM International's Green Cleanup subcommittee meeting (October 22, in Atlanta, GA)
- Develop options for use of a private sector green cleanup standard in EPA's cleanup programs (November 2009)
- Brief OSWER and OSRE senior management on outcomes of ASTM International's kick-off meeting and options for use of a standard (November)

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Web Links

U.S. EPA Greener Cleanups: <http://www.epa.gov/oswer/greencleanups/standard.html>

U.S. EPA CLU-IN/Green Remediation: http://www.cluin.org/greenremediation/subtab_b5.cfm

ASTM International: <http://www.astm.org/COMMIT/COMMITTEE/E50.htm>

ASTSWMO: http://astswmo.org/files/resources/greencleanups/GCTF_Incentives_Paper_6-25-09.pdf