



Petroleum Hydrocarbon Cleanup for Oversize Material

Summary

This technical memorandum allows a responsible person (RP) to remove oversize material from soil that needs to be remediated or tested under certain circumstances. Rock material greater than two inches in diameter may be considered oversize material and as long as it is not porous or has visible petroleum product on the surface. Oversize material must be disposed of in a non-wetland and/or non-environmentally sensitive area with sufficient separation to prevent leaching or migration of contamination to the water table. This technical memorandum replaces the *Petroleum Hydrocarbon Cleanup for Oversize Material* technical memorandum dated September 2005.

Purpose

This technical memorandum provides guidance for the treatment of oversize material, defined herein as greater than two inches in diameter, that is contaminated or potentially contaminated with refined petroleum products. This technical memorandum may be applied to material contaminated with other contaminants of concern on a site-specific basis.

Background

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Contaminated Sites Program (CSP) has developed cleanup levels for oil and other hazardous substances under the site cleanup rules, 18 Alaska Administrative Code (AAC) 75.325 – 18 AAC 75.390. Under 18 AAC 75.341, Table B1 provides Method Two soil cleanup levels for hazardous substances and Table B2 provides Method Two soil cleanup levels for petroleum hydrocarbons. In 18 AAC 75.990, “soil” is defined as “an unconsolidated geologic material including clay, loam, loess, silt, sand, gravel, tills, or a combination of these materials”.

Action

For sites with petroleum hydrocarbon contamination, including diesel range organics (DRO) gasoline range organics (GRO), residual range organics (RRO), semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs), or volatile organic compounds (VOCs), CSP staff should ensure that cleanup plans activities adequately address the treatment of oversize materials as specified below.

1. All material less than two inches in diameter must be treated to meet the applicable cleanup level, as specified in a CSP-approved work plan.
2. Soil “clumps” greater than two inches in diameter, including but not limited to, silt/clay compounds or frozen tundra and peat material, must be treated to meet the applicable cleanup level, based on a CSP-approved workplan.
3. Rock material greater than two inches in diameter does not require remediation or testing, unless it has the potential to hold excessive amounts of contamination or has visible petroleum product on the surface (surface stain). Materials that may hold excessive contamination may include shales, schists, limestone, pumice, or other porous types of rocks.

4. Large non-rock type material, such as tree stumps, should be treated or disposed of in a manner consistent with 18 AAC 60.
5. All material must be disposed of in a non-wetland and/or non-environmentally sensitive area with sufficient separation to prevent leaching or migration of contamination to the water table.

Rationale

The cleanup levels for soil are based on unconsolidated material. Most types of large rock do not absorb contaminants, so the contamination only exists on the surface of the rock. This is a minimal amount of contamination. At some contaminated sites, the large rocks in the excavated soil may be difficult and costly to transport and treat. Because these large rocks are unlikely to present a risk to human health, a RP can remove large rocks from the excavated soil and place them in an area where they will not pose a risk to human health, safety, welfare, or the environment.

Issued: March 12, 2026

Stephanie Buss

Stephanie Buss, Contaminated Sites Program Manager