

Risk Assessment

In Ohio, the Remedial Response Program was created by Ohio EPA to address uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste sites. The process that the Remedial Response Program uses to clean up sites is consistent with the process outlined in the National Contingency Plan ([NCP](#)). The process begins with site discovery or notification of possible releases of hazardous substances. Upon discovery or notification, sites are assessed to determine if a release has occurred.

This assessment includes a preliminary phase in which readily available information about a site and its surroundings are collected to quickly identify the level of potential risk posed to public health and safety and the environment. This preliminary assessment helps identify whether additional investigation and/or an interim or emergency response is warranted. The second phase of site assessment involves physical investigation of a site. This includes the collection and analyses of environmental and waste samples to determine what hazardous substances are present, at what concentrations and in which media. The site assessment serves as a cursory evaluation of contaminant migration and exposure pathways (e.g., air, ground water, surface water, soil).

The next step in the process is the base-line risk assessment. A risk assessment uses information about a site to estimate a theoretical level of risk for people who might be exposed to site-related contamination. The information used in a risk assessment comes from scientific studies and environmental site data. The risk assessment provides an estimate of the potential adverse affects (cancer and non-cancer affects) to persons who could be exposed to hazardous materials present at a site.

A risk assessment is used to determine what levels of toxic substances at hazardous waste sites pose an unacceptable risk as defined by regulatory standards and requirements. Risk assessments are key for the Remedial Response Program to determine hazardous site cleanup strategies that will ensure overall protection of human health and the environment. Risk assessment information is used to decide what actions need to be taken to protect human health. For additional information click here: [risk assessment](#).