

ARCHIVED: Archived because revisions made to VAP rules in 2002 in OAC Chapter 3745-300 render inaccurate the rule citations in this document (technical content remains accurate under the 1996 VAP rules). Refer to VA30009.03.001 for the updated document.

TITLE: Determining background for Sediments

DATE

EFFECTIVE: 2000

KEYWORDS: Sampling, sediment assessment, sediment background, soil background

RULES: VAP rule related to this issue: OAC 3745-300-07(I), OAC 3745-300-09(F)

QUESTION: Per the VAP rules, are the soil background procedures applicable to sediment also?

ANSWER: The VAP rule pertaining to the sampling and calculation of background, OAC Rule 3745-300-07 (I), does not specifically address background concentrations in sediments. This rule provision gives detailed procedures for the derivation of background in soils and ground water only.

However, Section 3746.06 of the ORC provides for the use of background in *lieu* of an applicable standard otherwise determined in accordance with the statute. This applies broadly to all media, including sediments. Since the VAP rules provide no specific procedures for determining background in sediments, a Certified Professional (CP) may use any reasonable or appropriate method for making such a determination. The VAP has provided guidance under technical assistance regarding background concentrations in wetland sediments. In the case of this technical assistance site, the wetland sediments were comprised of a low, wet area without a discernable flow gradient and, as a result, the background procedures for soils in Paragraph (I)(1) of Rule 3745-300-07 were deemed to be appropriate for determination of background concentrations in sediments. Conversely, if the sediments are in a stream, the considerations of gradient may be more significant, and the importance of sediment sampling for background in areas upgradient of an identified area or

the point of any release is significant. Other reasonable proposals, provided by the CP or volunteer, for determining background in sediments are open to consideration.

In *lieu* of a demonstration of compliance with background concentrations in sediments, a demonstration may be made that on-Property sediments are at or below concentrations of upgradient sediment contamination levels, in accordance with Paragraph (F)(4)(a) of Rule 3745-300-09.

SUMMARY:

The VAP rule pertaining to the sampling and calculation of background, OAC Rule 3745-300-07 (I), does not specifically address background concentrations in sediments. However, Section 3746.06 of the ORC provides for the use of background in *lieu* of an applicable standard otherwise determined in accordance with the statute. This applies broadly to all media, including sediments. Since the VAP rules provide no specific procedures for determining background in sediments, a Certified Professional (CP) may use any reasonable or appropriate method for making such a determination.

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