

Environmental Transaction Screening (also known as Streamline Environmental Screening)

The Transaction Screen Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) is completed in accordance with the American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM) Standard E 1528-06. This practice is designed to identify Potential Environmental Concerns (PECs) in connection with a property and does not necessarily require the judgment of an Environmental Professional as defined in the All Appropriate Inquiry (All Appropriate Inquiry) and ASTM Standard E 1527-05 standards.

The ASTM Standard E 1528 was revised in February 2006 and as a result of this revision, the Standard now states **that if a driving force behind the environmental due diligence is a desire to qualify for CERCLA innocent landowner liability protection this practice should not be applied and a Phase I ESA must be completed, which meets the AAI and ASTM Standard E 1527-05 standards.** Transaction Screen ESAs, if conducted, are generally prepared for low risk properties only.

The Transaction Screen ESA process includes completion of the following:

- Completion of the ASTM Transaction Screen Questionnaire by the owner; occupant (if applicable); and the preparer of the Transaction Screen ESA.
- Completion of a site reconnaissance.
- Obtaining and reviewing environmental databases as documented within the ASTM standard for the property and neighboring properties.
- Review of reasonably ascertainable Sanborn® Fire Insurance Maps.
- Review of reasonable ascertainable local city directories.

The results of the Transaction Screen ESA will conclude either: 1) that no PECs are present; therefore no further inquiry is necessary; or 2) that PECs are identified, which require further inquiry to evaluate the PECs. Further inquiry could be proceeding to a full ASTM E 1527-05 Phase I ESA.

Preparers of Transaction Screenings

Often a multi-disciplinary approach is taken in compiling all the components of a Transaction Screening study, since skills in chemistry, atmospheric physics, geology, microbiology and even botany are frequently required. Many of the preparers are environmental scientists who have been trained to integrate these diverse disciplines. Many states have professional registrations, which are applicable to the preparers of Transaction Screening; for example, the state of California has a registration entitled "California Registered Environmental Assessor Class I or Class II".

Under ASTM E 1527-05 and/or ASTM 1528-06 parameters were set forth as to who is qualified to perform Transaction Screening. The new parameter defined an Environmental Professional as someone with:

1. a current Professional Engineer's or Professional Geologist's license or registration from a state or U.S. territory with 3 years equivalent full-time experience;
2. have a Baccalaureate or higher degree from an accredited institution of higher education in a discipline of engineering or science and 5 years equivalent full-time experience; or
3. have the equivalent of 10 years full-time experience.

A person not meeting one or more of those qualifications may assist in the conduct of a Transaction Screening if the individual is under the supervision or responsible charge of a person meeting the definition of an Environmental Professional when concluding such activities. Most Transaction Screenings are conducted by private companies independent of the owner or potential purchaser of the land.