

GUIDANCE FOR OBTAINING TEST HOLE AND STREET USE PERMITS FOR INVESTIGATION OR REMEDIATION OF CONTAMINATION IN CITY STREETS & LANEWAYS

Revised: July 2020

The City of Vancouver (the City) has prepared this guide with updated requirements to obtain a Test Hole Permit (THP) and Street Use Permit (SUP) for the purpose of investigating or remediating contamination in City streets and laneways.

BACKGROUND

The British Columbia Ministry of Environment & Climate Change Strategy (ENV) requires that, “if during any stage of investigation or independent remediation, it is determined that one or more substances have migrated or there is reason to believe substances have migrated to a neighbouring parcel and is causing (or is likely causing) contamination of that parcel, the affected neighbouring parcel owner(s) and ministry must be notified within 15 days by the responsible person (e.g., source land owner) when he or she knows of the situation”. These notices are called Notifications of Likely or Actual Migration (NOM) and the responsible person must provide a NOM consistent with sections 57 and 60.1 of the *Environmental Management Act* (EMA) Contaminated Sites Regulation (CSR).

To ensure the City is being notified of likely or actual contamination in City streets and laneways, a NOM needs to be submitted in accordance with BC ENV guidance documents during the THP or SUP application process. A NOM is not required during the application process if previously submitted to the City and ENV. Information from the NOM will be used for the protection of trench workers and to gain knowledge of contamination in City streets and laneways for asset management and liability purposes.

TEST HOLE PERMITS

In addition to the standard THP requirements¹, a NOM is required prior to issuance of a THP when contaminants are known or suspected to exceed applicable standards. Exceptions may be considered by the City’s Contaminated Sites Team (CST) on a site-by-site basis based on specific factors (e.g., when a building footprint extends to property boundaries and no drilling has taken place on the site, or when groundwater use standards have not yet been confirmed). For more information or to discuss your site, please contact the City’s CST.

A Test Hole Investigation Report will be provided to the applicant when the THP is issued and will be required to be completed and submitted electronically to the CST within two months of completing the drilling investigation in City streets and laneways. In addition to providing the City with a completed Test Hole Investigation Report, supporting information including a site plan,

¹ See Appendix C in: <http://vancouver.ca/files/cov/UtilitiesDesignConstructionManual.pdf>

figures and tables summarizing analytical data compared to applicable City standards², and copies of certified laboratory analytical reports, must also be included.

STREET USE PERMITS

A SUP is required prior to completing an excavation or remediation in City streets or laneways (e.g., excavating on a roadway due to a leaking underground storage tank [UST]). As part of the SUP permitting process a NOM is required to be submitted to the City and ENV, unless it was previously submitted through the THP process. In addition, information including but not limited to, engineered drawings illustrating the proposed excavation area in relation to underground utilities, expected limits of contamination, cross-sections illustrating the proposed excavation depths, traffic management plan, relevant insurance documents, and deposit are required to be submitted.

It is recommended that applicants contact the CST to discuss SUP requirements as soon as remediation or excavation in a City Street or laneway is contemplated. Once the scope of work is understood, the CST can advise on if a SUP is required and engage with the appropriate departments to issue the SUP.

Following the completion of remediation of contamination in City streets or laneways, a Confirmation of Remediation (CoR) report is required to be submitted to the CST within three months, or at a time that has been agreed upon with the CST.

The CoR report should be submitted electronically in Adobe® PDF format and include the following:

- site and sampling location plans
- copy of the Notification of Independent Remediation
- tables and figures summarizing confirmatory soil sampling results compared to applicable City standards
- laboratory certificates of analyses
- photographs documenting the remedial excavation activities
- contaminated material disposal verification (e.g., waste manifests)
- post-remediation monitoring schedule (if applicable)
- monitoring well decommissioning schedule or confirmation of the decommissioning activities (if applicable)
- written assertion from a Contaminated Sites Approved Professional (CSAP) or Qualified Professional (QP) as defined by the ENV³ that remediation was completed in accordance with the applicable Regulations and to the appropriate standards.²

Note: If a Certificate of Compliance or other ENV Instrument is being pursued, the City requires that a separate Instrument be issued for that portion of City-owned land (e.g. land dedication or ROW, etc.).

² The BC CSR soil, groundwater, and vapour standards applicable to City streets and laneways include:

- **Soil:** Soil is to be remediated to the Industrial Land Use standards with the exception of the top 1m of soil in boulevards, street medians, and beneath sidewalks which must be remediated to Low Density Residential Land Use standards.
- **Groundwater:** Groundwater is to be remediated in accordance with standards that apply under the CSR.
- **Vapour:** Vapour is to be remediated to the Industrial Land Use standards.

³ <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/air-land-water/site-remediation/docs/procedures/procedure08.pdf>

CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact the Utilities Management Branch at StreetUtilities.Permit@vancouver.ca to obtain a THP to drill in City streets and laneways.

Contact the Development and Major Projects Branch at StreetUseReview@vancouver.ca to obtain a SUP to complete an excavation in City streets and laneways.

Contact the Contaminated Sites Team at Contaminated.Sites@vancouver.ca to discuss technical questions regarding contaminated site investigations and remediation in City streets and laneways.