Clean and Greener Policy for Contaminated Sites
EPA Region 1
Office of Site Remediation and Restoration

Revised February 2012

A core part of EPA's mission is ensuring that contaminated sites are cleaned up to be protective of human health and the environment. The process of cleaning up and returning these sites to beneficial use generally requires energy, water, materials, and other resources that can create an environmental footprint of its own. An *environmental footprint* considers the broader environmental impacts of an activity, such as the depletion and degradation of natural resources or other potential consequences.

EPA Region 1's Office of Site Remediation and Restoration is committed to using and promoting strategies and practices that reduce the environmental footprint during cleanup and restoration activities, to the extent feasible and consistent with applicable statutes, regulations and guidance. This *Clean and Greener Policy for Contaminated Sites* embraces the following green remediation objectives, where practical and appropriate:

- Minimize total energy use and maximize use of renewable energy;
- Minimize air emissions and greenhouse gas generation;
- Minimize water use and impacts to water resources;
- Reduce, reuse, and recycle materials and wastes; and
- Protect and minimize adverse impacts to land and ecosystems.

Opportunities for achieving these green remediation objectives should be evaluated for each stage of the site cleanup process. These opportunities will depend on site-specific conditions and will vary accordingly. Some examples of potential activities include:

- Utilizing solar, wind, or on-site landfill methane to power remediation systems and heat buildings;
- Reducing energy consumption by on-site equipment and buildings;
- Using cleaner fuels, diesel emission controls, and other emission reduction practices for construction vehicles and other equipment;
- Choosing more energy efficient modes of transportation for waste and materials (e.g., use of rail for long distance hauling);
- Employing best management practices for stormwater (e.g., bioremediation terraces);
- Reducing water use and recycling treated waste water;
- Substituting recycled materials for virgin materials (e.g., coal-ash based cement instead of Portland cement, 100% recycled geotextile fabric for cover systems); and
- Supporting environmentally-sustainable site reuse (e.g., renewable energy production, smart growth, healthy and productive ecosystems, green buildings).

This policy applies to all cleanups performed by EPA or under EPA oversight through the Superfund, Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) corrective action, Underground Storage Tank (UST), and Brownfields programs. Region 1 will also promote this policy in state-authorized and state-lead cleanup programs.

This policy does not change or modify any legal requirements regarding the selection of appropriate cleanup actions under applicable law. Nor is it intended to compromise cleanup objectives, community interests, the reasonableness of cleanup timeframes, or the protectiveness of cleanup actions. EPA will consult with communities regarding response actions and will consider anticipated future land use, consistent with existing requirements. This policy shall be implemented consistent with the national *Principles for Greener Cleanups* issued by EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response on August 27, 2009 (www.epa.gov/oswer/greenercleanups/principles.html).

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