



Assessment and Management of Department for Education Sites Treated with Termitecides

Introduction

This guide note has been developed for Department for Education sites and relates to the assessment of risk to human health resulting from residual chemicals used for the control of termites. Department for Education is responsible for the provision of public education services, child care and employment training and is one of the largest state building owners with assets disbursed across the State.

The guide note aims to ensure that appropriate protocols are implemented when it is proposed to remove or demolish buildings on Department for Education sites and that residual chemicals are removed or managed as required for any subsequent use of the site.

Historically, the use of organochlorine and arsenic based pesticides was an effective and efficient method to control termite infestation. However in recent decades there has been concern that these compounds may potentially cause adverse human health and environmental effects.

Organochlorine pesticides and arsenic are resistant to degradation and thus persist in the environment for many years. The brand names of commonly used organochlorine pesticides include aldrin, dieldrin, chlordane and heptachlor.

The provision of termite treatment(s) to protect built assets on Department for Education sites has generally been managed by the Department of Infrastructure and Transport (DIT) utilising legally acceptable and established industry materials and practices.

DIT in association with Department for Education and the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has adopted the following guidelines to identify and manage soils potentially contaminated by the previous use of termite treatments, including managing the potential exposure to persons as a result of construction works.

Risk Assessment

The assessment of risk to health and the environment is to be undertaken in accordance with the [National Environment Protection \(Assessment of Site Contamination\) Measure 1999](#) (NEPM).

The lead professional service contractor (lead PSC) for the project must ensure that all assessments are undertaken by an approved environmental consultant with the full range of competencies that are defined in the NEPM. The environmental consultant is expected to give adequate consideration to the appropriate use of health and ecological investigation levels.

For sensitive sites, such as primary schools, pre-schools and child care centres, and where site contamination exists, the EPA recommends the use of an independent site contamination auditor accredited by EPA South Australia to assess and provide expert opinion on the suitability of the site for its intended use. The DIT Project Risk Manager will seek the agreement of Department for Education prior to the engagement of an auditor. By definition under the *Environment Protection Act 1993*, a secondary school is not considered to be a sensitive site.

A copy of the report/s of the risk assessment must be provided to the DIT Project Risk Manager.



OFFICIAL

Assessment and Management of Department for Education Sites Treated With Termiteicides

Building Removal/Demolition

Department for Education has an established policy for the provision of school facilities whereby a core of solid construction buildings is supplemented with relocatable buildings to accommodate peak student enrolments (<http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/CorePlusPolicyforNewSchool.pdf>). Many of the relocatable buildings are of timber construction and have been regularly treated over time for the effects of termite infestation. Similarly, many existing solid construction buildings (with timber or concrete floors) have been treated for termite infestation by the application of pesticides.

Whenever a relocatable building is to be removed or demolished from a site or permanent buildings (including shelter sheds) are to be demolished, it will be necessary to undertake soil testing to determine whether contamination exists. Sampling shall be undertaken before demolition or soil disturbance if possible.

If contamination is confirmed, remedial works and/or ongoing site management must be identified prior to any refurbishment of the area vacated by the building's removal or any construction work proceeding.

If there has been disturbance of contaminated soil, contaminants must not be spread to other areas. If sampling and assessment occurs after the building is removed, adequate temporary barricades to prevent access to the site must be provided.

Refer also to the guide note 'Site Contamination (G37) available for download from the Building Project Information Management System ([BPIMS](#)) project library.

Contact

For further information contact:

Senior Civil Engineer

Phone: 08 8343 2273

