



Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

To: Remediation Division Project Managers
Date: June 28, 2000

Thru:  Jacqueline S. Hardee, P.E., Director
Remediation Division

From:  Chet Clarke, Manager
Technical Support Section

Subject: Using non-site specific background assumptions under the 30 TAC 335 Risk Reduction Rules.

As stated in Section VI.3 of the TNRCC Interoffice Memorandum dated July 23, 1998, regarding Implementation of the Existing Risk Reduction Rule, commonly referred to as the "Consistency Document," background concentrations established under the Risk Reduction Rule (30 TAC 335) must be established site-specifically and that Soil Conservation Survey or U.S. Geological Survey reports should not be used to characterize site-specific background for soils. The general policy regarding background as stated in the Consistency Document stands but is now modified to address situations when background cannot be established site-specifically. These situations are limited to sites without appropriate locations being available, due to the extent of contamination from releases or presence of physical barriers, to collect natural background concentration data which are reasonably proximal or within the same environmental media as the affected media of interest. In situations where there are no appropriate locations to collect natural background concentration data, persons may use the following table to determine background concentrations. Otherwise, the person must set background site-specifically. Quantification of anthropogenic background likely will not be influenced by these location constraints and should continue to be based on sample locations beyond the release site.

Texas-Specific Background Concentration	
Metal	Median Background Concentration (mg/kg)
Aluminum	30,000
Antimony	1
Arsenic	5.9
Barium	300
Beryllium	1.5

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Boron	30
Total Chromium	30
Cobalt	7
Copper	15
Fluorine	190
Iron	15,000
Lead	15
Manganese	300
Mercury	0.04
Nickel	10
Selenium	0.3
Strontium	100
Tin	0.9
Titanium	2,000
Thallium	9.3
Vanadium	50
Zinc	30

Additional constituents may be added to this table as information becomes available.