

Environmental Risk Management

Companies, government entities, and other organizations face environmental risks. Some risks, such as the contamination of real property, can become a liability to the company or organization. The liability often needs to be addressed from a technical, regulatory, legal, public relations, and financial perspective.

If a potential release could have occurred at the property or off-site releases impact the property, then field investigations are required to identify the presence and nature of contaminants, and their extent and magnitude. Once contamination has been confirmed, then the risks posed by that contamination to human health and the environment need to be assessed.

The liability can be quantified using a deterministic method which collects actual site data through a field investigation and prepares site-specific liability estimates (e.g. remediation cost estimates). Alternatively, for larger sites or portfolios of sites, a stochastic approach may be used, where key cost (liability) factors are determined, a statistically representative data set obtained, and a stochastic (e.g. Monte Carlo) simulation of liabilities performed.

Once risks and liabilities are quantified, a strategy or management plan should be developed to address them. This may involve the following: a technical strategy to remediate contamination; a regulatory strategy to manage government oversight; a legal strategy to pursue other parties responsible for the contamination or defend against impacted parties; a public relations (PR) strategy when the issues may come to the attention of the public; and a financial strategy to fund any mitigation and account for it on a balance sheet.

Aquilologic staff has conducted risk assessments, liability assessments, and developed environmental risk management plans. In addition to technical advice, we provide valuable input in the regulatory, legislative, legal, and PR aspects of these plans. Our ability to work as a team with client's staff, counsel, and other consultants has been critical to the success of these projects.