

Appendix I: Glossary and Acronym List

Acute: Short-term, severe, or high-intensity.

Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR): An agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that was created to perform specific functions concerning the effect of hazardous substances on human health.

Chlorinated Solvents: Organic solvents containing chlorine atoms (for example, methylene chloride and 1,1,1-trichloromethane are chemicals that contain chlorine). Uses of chlorinated solvents include aerosol spray containers, certain paints, and dry-cleaning fluids.

Chronic: Long-term, lower intensity.

Community Advisory Group (CAG): A self-sustaining group that receives administrative and facilitative support from EPA. Forming a CAG is one of the opportunities EPA provides to the community during the Superfund process to receive advice from the public.

Community Involvement Plan (CIP): As a requirement of the Superfund process, Federal Law requires that EPA write a CIP prior to the Remedial Investigation to determine the best ways to communicate with the affected community.

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA): A Federal act (Public Law 96-510; December 11, 1980) that provides for liability, cleanup, and emergency response for hazardous substances released into the environment and the cleanup of inactive waste disposal sites.

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System (CERCLIS): A national database accessible to the public that contains information on current and potential hazardous waste sites, remedial activities nationwide, including sites listed or proposed for listing on the National Priorities List. Visit http://www.epa.gov/enviro/html/cerclis/cerclis_query.html

Emergency Response Program (ERP): The Emergency Response Program is a coordinated effort among five key EPA organizations and EPA's 10 Superfund Divisions. The mission of the ERP is to prevent, plan for, and respond to emergencies. The ERP's emergency response activities are short term actions designed to protect the public from immediate threats to human health and the environment.

Feasibility Study (FS): A document that provides an assessment of remedial alternatives (including taking no action), their relative strengths and weaknesses, and the trade-offs in selecting one alternative over another.

Federal Register: The official daily publication for rules, proposed rules, and notices of Federal agencies and organizations, as well as executive orders and other presidential documents. Visit <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/>

Groundwater: The supply of fresh water trapped beneath the Earth's surface. Groundwater from wells and springs can be a major source of drinking water.

Hazard Ranking System (HRS): The principal screening tool used by EPA to evaluate risks to public health and the environment associated with abandoned or uncontrolled hazardous waste sites. The HRS calculates a score based on the potential

of hazardous substances spreading from the site through the air, surface water, or groundwater, and on other factors such as density and proximity of human population. This score is the primary factor in deciding if the site should be on the National Priorities List and, if so, what ranking it should have compared to other sites on the list.

Hazardous Waste: Solid wastes that have been determined to be a hazardous waste because they possess at least one of four characteristics (ignitability, corrosivity, reactivity or toxicity), or appear on special EPA lists.

Human Carcinogen: A compound that causes cancer in humans.

Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL): The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water.

National Contingency Plan (NCP): The federal government's blueprint for responding to both oil spills and hazardous substance releases.

National Priorities List (NPL): A published list of hazardous waste sites in the country that are eligible for funding to carry out extensive, long-term cleanup under the Superfund program.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA): The Federal agency responsible for creating and enforcing workplace safety and health regulations.

Parts Per Billion (ppb): One part contaminant in one billion parts substance (soil, water, etc. except air, see parts per billion by volume below).

Parts Per Billion by Volume (ppbv): One part contaminant in one billion parts air.

Plume: The area covered by contamination that can be visible in the air (a plume of smoke) or invisible and only detected with testing (contaminants moving through groundwater).

Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs): Entities that are potentially responsible for generating, transporting, or disposing of the hazardous waste found at a site.

Preliminary Assessment (PA): A limited-scope investigation to collect readily available information about a site and its surrounding area. The PA is designed to distinguish, based on limited data, between sites that pose little or no threat to human health and the environment and sites that may pose a threat and require further investigation.

Proposed Plan: A plan that proposes a particular remedy for site cleanup after completion of the RI/FS.

Public Health Assessment (PHA): An ATSDR document that examines hazardous substances, health outcomes, and community concerns at a hazardous waste site to determine whether people could be harmed from coming into contact with those substances. The PHA also lists actions that need to be taken to protect public health.

Record of Decision (ROD): A document that details the factors that shaped the decision to select the proposed remedial alternative over all other alternatives.

Remedial Action (RA): The actual construction or implementation phase of a Superfund site cleanup that follows remedial design.

Remedial Design (RD): A phase of remedial action that follows the remedial

investigation/feasibility study and includes development of engineering drawings and specifications for a site remediation.

Remedial Investigation (RI): Actions undertaken to characterize the full nature and extent of contamination, including characterization of hazardous substances, characterization of the facility, evaluation of human health and ecological risks, and collection and evaluation of information relevant to the identification of hot spots of contamination.

Remedial Program: The Superfund Program which conducts long-term remediation activities. Sites included in this program must pose a serious but not immediate potential threat to human health and the environment.

Remediate: To remove or contain contaminated materials in soil, groundwater, and soil gas.

Remediation: Cleanup or other methods used to remove or contain a toxic spill or hazardous material at a contaminated site.

Remedy: Removal or containment of contaminated materials in soil, groundwater, and soil gas.

Reuse Assessment: Collection and evaluation of information from local government officials, property owners, and community members to develop reasonably anticipated future land use assumptions.

Risk Evaluation: EPA's process of evaluating whether a hazardous substance poses a potential threat, either currently or in a reasonably likely future, to human health and the environment.

Site Investigation (SI): An onsite investigation designed to collect information needed for the Hazard Ranking System (the principal mechanism EPA uses to place hazardous waste sites on the NPL) scoring and documentation.

Soil Gas: Gaseous elements and compounds in the small spaces between particles of soil. Such gases can be moved or driven out under pressure.

Superfund: The program operated under the legislative authority of CERCLA that funds and carries out EPA solid waste emergency and long-term removal as well as remedial activities. These activities include establishing the National Priorities List, investigating sites for inclusion on the list, determining their priority, and conducting and/or supervising cleanup and other remedial actions.

Technical Assistance Grant (TAG): Funds provided by EPA for communities affected by Superfund sites to hire an independent technical advisor to help interpret and comment on site-related information.

Thermal Oxidation: Use of heated temperatures to eliminate hazardous wastes.

Treatment System: A system designed to remove solids and/or pollutants from solid waste, waste-streams, effluents, and air emissions.

Vinyl Chloride: A chemical compound, used in producing some plastics, that is known to be a cancer-causing agent.

Volatile: Evaporates readily at normal pressures and temperatures.

Acronym List

ATSDR – Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry

BART – Bay Area Rapid Transit

CAG – Community Advisory Group

CERCLA – Comprehensive, Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act

CERCLIS – Comprehensive, Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System

CIP – Community Involvement Plan

DHS – California Department of Health Services

EPA – United States Environmental Protection Agency

ERP – Emergency Response Program

FS – Feasibility Study

HRS - Hazard Ranking System

MCL – Maximum Contaminant Level

NCP – National Contingency Plan

NIEHS - National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences

NPL – National Priorities List

OSHA – Occupational Safety and Health Administration

PA/SI – Preliminary Assessment/Site Investigation

PG&E – Pacific Gas and Electric Company

PHA – Public Health Assessment

ppb – parts per billion

ppbv – parts per billion by volume

PRPs – Potentially Responsible Parties

RA – Remedial Action

RD – Remedial Design

RI – Remedial Investigation

ROD – Record of Decision

TAG – Technical Assistance Grant

TCE – trichloroethene