

Working on previously developed land

What?

- ❑ land that has previously been built on or used by industrial processes ("brownfield land") or that has in the past had imported material placed upon it ("made ground") may be contaminated with substances that are harmful to humans, wildlife and/or the surrounding environment
- ❑ contaminants could be present in solid form such as asbestos or tar residues, in liquid form such as oils or solvents or even as a gas such as methane
- ❑ potentially contaminated material can sometimes be discovered where it is not expected, so it is wise to remain observant during operations.



Why?

- ❑ **avoid environmental harm:** working in contaminated soils without the proper precautions and controls may result in pollution and/or harm spreading into the surrounding land, nearby watercourses or into the atmosphere
- ❑ **avoid prosecution:** any pollution escaping from the site may lead to prosecution
- ❑ **reduce health hazard:** exposure to certain contaminants may cause skin and/or respiratory irritation, cancer or birth defects. Wearing the correct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) can prevent ill health
- ❑ **public relations:** bad publicity arising from pollution incidents damages the reputation of the company.

Questions

- 1 Where is there contaminated land on this site?
- 2 What type of contamination is there on this site and how is it to be managed?
- 3 What hazards are created by this contaminated land?
- 4 Is the contaminated land clearly marked on the ground or its location known or identified?

Do

- ✓ read and/or have explained until it is understood what to look out for and the precautions to be taken
- ✓ know what the management plan is for contaminated land
- ✓ be aware of any known areas of contamination
- ✓ always wear the correct PPE for the anticipated contaminants
- ✓ look out for changes to the types of material being worked in that may show up as:
 - differences in colour or texture
 - the presence of refuse (rubbish) or other foreign objects
 - differences in smell – common contaminants such as oils, landfill gases and degrading waste have distinctive odours
 - fumes

if changes like these are seen **STOP WORK. Make the area safe and notify a line manager**

- ✓ wash hands and all areas of exposed skin after working in made ground or brownfield land
- ✓ prevent the spread of contaminated dust – either cover the source or damp it down
- ✓ prevent runoff entering drains/watercourses.

Don't

- ✗ remove PPE
- ✗ smoke or eat while working in made ground
- ✗ permit colleagues or other operatives to enter the contaminated land until a line manager gives instructions to do so.



Developed from W045 Environmental Toolbox talks
Date issued: November 2015

Title:		Date:
Given by:		
Site:		

Name	Company	Signature