



Radioactive Contaminated Land

The Environmental Permitting Regulations

August 2012

We regulate how people keep and use radioactive materials and the accumulation and disposal of radioactive waste on or from premises in England and Wales under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010 (EPR10).

Under the EPR10 we don't consider radioactively contaminated land, per se, as either the "keeping" or "use" of radioactive material, or the "accumulation" or "disposal" of radioactive waste. However, as soon as any action is taken in relation to that radioactively contaminated land and waste is generated, then the waste is, if within scope, subject to the EPR10 and requires a permit or compliance with exemption conditions.

Remediating (cleaning up) land contaminated with radioactivity can generate radioactive waste. Examples of such waste include contaminated soil or rubble excavated from the site for disposal; contaminated groundwater discharged from a site to a local watercourse or public sewer; and contaminated dust that becomes airborne as a result of the work.

We have to authorise any accumulation and/or disposal of radioactive waste resulting from remedial / clean-up work, unless the waste is exempt.

Exempt values for the disposal of solid radioactive waste are derived mainly from the Government's Low Level Waste Policy of 2007 as well as some minor exemption provisions that existed prior to 2011 (when the exemption regime was established within the EPR10 by amendment). This includes the exemption for Very Low Level Waste via co-disposal with substantial quantities of non-radioactive waste.

Guidance on the scope of and exemptions from the radioactive substances legislation in the UK is provided at: <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/sectors/133736.aspx>

You can find further information on applying EPR10 to disposals of radioactive wastes, including guidance on how to apply for a permit, at: <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/sectors/123129.aspx>