



## WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES NOTICE OF FINAL GUIDANCE & CERTIFICATION

*Pursuant to ch. 227, Wis. Stats., the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has finalized and hereby certifies the following guidance document.*

### DOCUMENT ID

RR-19-5421-C

### DOCUMENT TITLE

Model Letter: RP Letter - New Case

### PROGRAM/BUREAU

Remediation and Redevelopment

### STATUTORY AUTHORITY OR LEGAL CITATION

Wis. Stats. ch. 292; Wis. Admin. Code ch. NR 700

### DATE SENT TO LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU (FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS)

26-Aug-19

### DATE FINALIZED

02-Sept-19

### DNR CERTIFICATION

*I have reviewed this guidance document or proposed guidance document and I certify that it complies with sections 227.10 and 227.11 of the Wisconsin Statutes. I further certify that the guidance document or proposed guidance document contains no standard, requirement, or threshold that is not explicitly required or explicitly permitted by a statute or a rule that has been lawfully promulgated. I further certify that the guidance document or proposed guidance document contains no standard, requirement, or threshold that is more restrictive than a standard, requirement, or threshold contained in the Wisconsin Statutes.*

Signature

September 4, 2019

Date

**DNR - Remediation and Redevelopment**  
**RR-5421, RP Letter - New Case Template Letter**  
**October 2018**

**PURPOSE:** Use this template once a release is verified by sample results to send to responsibility parties for new cases.

**NOTES:**

Yellow highlighted text contains notes/directions to the DNR staff writing the letter.

Grey highlighted text contains areas where DNR staff need to fill in the information.

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This document is intended solely as guidance and does not contain any mandatory requirements except where requirements found in statute or administrative rule are referenced. Any regulatory decisions made by the Department of Natural Resources in any matter addressed by this guidance will be made by applying the governing statutes and administrative rules to the relevant facts.

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[DATE]

[RP\_NAME]

[RP\_ADDRESS\_1]

[RP\_ADDRESS\_2]

[RP\_CITY], [RP\_STATE] [RP\_ZIP]

Subject: Reported Contamination at [ACTIVITY\_DETAIL\_NAME], [RP\_ADDRESS\_1], WI  
DNR BRRTS Activity # [ACTIVITY\_DETAIL\_NO]  
DNR FID # [FID]

Dear [RP\_NAME]:

On [START\_DATE], [PR\_NAME], on behalf of [RP\_NAME], notified the Department of Natural Resources (“department”) that a [edit as needed: “hazardous substance discharge or other environmental pollution”] was detected at the site described above.

Information submitted to the department regarding this site indicates you are responsible for the discharge of a hazardous substance or other environmental pollution (hereafter referred to as “contamination”) at the above-described site. “Site” refers to the property where the contamination occurred and any other property it has migrated to, as defined in Wisconsin Administrative Code (“Wis. Admin. Code”) § NR 700.03(56).

This letter explains how to initiate the investigation and cleanup of contamination of the site, and how to access further information and assistance from the department. The longer contamination is left in the environment, the farther it can spread and the more it may cost to clean up. Quick action may lessen damage to your property and neighboring properties and reduce your costs in investigating and cleaning up the contamination.

### **Legal Responsibilities:**

Persons meeting the definition of “responsible party” under Wis. Admin. Code § NR 700.03(51) must follow applicable law to address the discharge of a hazardous substance to the environment or other environmental pollution. Wisconsin Statutes (“Wis. Stats.”) ch. 292 and Wis. Admin. Code chs. NR 700 through NR 754 provide specific requirements for undertaking appropriate response actions to address contamination, including requirements for emergency and interim actions, public information, site investigations, remedy selection, design and operation of remedial action systems, and case closure.

### **General Recommendations for Responsible Parties:**

The department recommends that you:

#### *1. Hire a Qualified Environmental Consultant*

To ensure response actions you plan to undertake comply with Wisconsin law, you should hire an environmental consultant within **30 days**, by [enter the date that is equal to the mailing date of this letter plus 30 days], to meet the regulatory deadlines listed below. A delay in hiring an environmental consultant could result in you missing key submittal deadlines.

Hiring a consulting firm with staff that have the appropriate State of Wisconsin qualifications to supervise and certify the submittals is a critical component and necessary to meet your requirements. Further, an environmental consultant should be knowledgeable of Wisconsin's technical procedures and laws, and be able to answer questions regarding cleanup requirements. Required qualifications for environmental consultants are specified in Wis. Admin. Code ch. NR 712. Program guidance is available, see *Wis. Admin. Code ch. NR 712 Qualifications and Certifications, RR-081*.

## 2. *Properly Submit Reports on Time with Required Information Included*

Wisconsin law includes timeframes for submitting technical documents and conducting work, as well as specifications for what should be included in those submittals. This letter provides a general overview of the timeframes and first steps to take for site investigation and cleanup. For an overview of timing requirements, please refer to *NR 700 Process and Timeline Overview, RR-967*, enclosed.

The department developed the publication *Guidance for Electronic Submittals for the Remediation and Redevelopment Program, RR-690*, to assist responsible parties and consultants in properly submitting documents. Wis. Admin. Code § NR 700.11(3g), and other specific provisions within Wis. Admin. Code ch. NR 700, outline the requirements for submittals, including electronic submittals. Consultants and representatives of responsible parties are required to submit one paper copy and one electronic copy of submittals, including case closure documents. The electronic version must be an exact duplicate of the paper version. Failure to submit both a paper copy and electronic copy delays acceptance of your submittals.

## 3. *Consider the Benefits of a Fee-based Technical Review of your Submittals*

In-depth department review of technical reports and submittals is available for a fee. The Remediation and Redevelopment (RR) Program project managers are available throughout the process to answer general questions and provide general input as the site moves toward closure. However, if you want a formal written response from the department, a meeting or both on a specific submittal, a review fee will be required in accordance with Wis. Admin. Code ch. NR 749. **Obtaining technical assistance from department project managers throughout the process is an effective way to prevent problems and delays at the end of the process when case closure is requested.** Forms, a fee schedule, and further information on technical assistance is available at [dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov) and searching “brownfield fees”.

### **Required Steps to Take and Documents to Submit:**

The steps listed below serve as a general overview only — all mandatory steps and submittals specified in state law must be met before the department can grant “case closure”, which is a determination by the department that no further cleanup is necessary at a site, as defined in Wis. Admin. Code § NR 700.03(3m).

**[delete #1 if not applicable (e.g., no immediate actions were taken)]**

1. **Immediate Actions – NR 708.09:** The law requires you to take any immediate actions needed to halt and minimize harmful effects, unless you are otherwise directed by department staff, and to submit documentation describing immediate actions and outcomes within 45 days after the initial hazardous substance discharge notification is given to the department. A final immediate action report should be submitted in accordance with Wis. Admin. Code NR 708.09.
2. **Scoping and Work Plan Submittal – NR 716.07 and 716.09:** The law requires that you appropriately scope out your site investigation and submit a work plan within **60 days of this notification**, by [enter the date that is equal to the mailing date of this letter plus 60 days], for completing a site investigation. The work plan must comply with the requirements in Wis. Admin. Code, chs. NR 700 through NR 754. For additional assistance, the department has extensive guidance on its web page at [dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov) and search “brownfield publications”.

Prior to and during a site investigation, you must evaluate whether any interim actions are needed to contain or stabilize a hazardous substance discharge or environmental pollution, pursuant to Wis. Admin. Code § NR 708.11. If you undertake an interim action (e.g., free product removal), you must submit documentation of the action per Wis. Admin. Code § NR 708.15.

As you develop the site investigation work plan, you must include an assessment of the vapor intrusion pathway. Wis. Admin. Code § NR 716.11(5) outlines the requirements for when to evaluate for the presence of vapors in the sub-surface and in indoor air. The results and conclusions from the vapor assessment must be included in the Wis. Admin. Code § NR 716.15 site investigation report whether or not you elected to take vapor samples. *Addressing Vapor Intrusion at Remediation & Redevelopment Sites in Wisconsin, RR-800*, is available to help responsible parties and their consultants comply with these requirements.

3. **Field Investigation – NR 716.11**: Following submission of the work plan, the site investigation must be started within the timeframe provided under law. The timeframe varies depending on whether you are requesting the department’s fee-based review of the work plan. If you do not request a fee-based review of the work plan, you must initiate the field investigation within 90 days of submitting the work plan, and you may proceed with the field investigation upon department notification to proceed; however, if the department has not responded within 30 days, from submittal of the work plan, you may then proceed with the field investigation. If a fee and request for department review of the work plan is submitted, the field investigation must begin within 60 days after receiving department approval.
4. **Sample Results Notification Requirements – NR 716.14**: You must report sampling results to the department, owners, occupants, and various other parties within 10 business days after receiving the sampling results, unless a different timeframe is approved by the department, in accordance with Wis. Admin. Code § NR 716.14.
5. **Site Investigation Report – NR 716.15**: Within 60 days after completion of the field investigation and receipt of the laboratory data, the law requires you to submit a Site Investigation Report (SIR) to the department. As part of the SIR or in the Remedial Actions Options Report (RAOR), if there is soil contamination, the responsible party shall identify the current land use (i.e., industrial or non-industrial) and zoning for the site or facility in accordance with Wis. Admin. Code § NR 720.05(5). Also, as part of the SIR or in the RAOR, you must include any interim action report that may be required under Wis. Admin. Code § NR 708.15.
6. **Remedial Actions Options Report – NR 722**: Within 60 days after submitting the SIR, the law requires you to submit a RAOR. The selected remedy in the RAOR should include an evaluation of green and sustainable remediation criteria, as appropriate, as required by Wis. Admin. Code § NR 722.09(2m). This may be submitted as part of a broader SIR.
7. **Remedial and Interim Action Design, Implementation, Operation, Maintenance and Monitoring Reports – NR 724**: Unless otherwise directed by the department, the responsible party shall submit all plans and reports required in Wis. Admin. Code ch. NR 724.
8. **Notification of Residual Contamination or Continuing Obligations – NR 725**: In situations where notification is required, the responsible party must provide submittal(s) that confirms that continuing obligations have been identified and affected property owners have been notified by the responsible parties 30 days prior to case closure, as required by Wis. Admin. Code ch. NR 725.
9. **Semi-annual Reporting -- NR 700.11**: Wis. Admin. Code § NR 700.11(1)(a) requires responsible parties to submit semi-annual site progress reports to the department until final case closure is granted. The reports

summarize the work completed over six months and additional work planned to adequately complete the response action at the site. Consultants may submit these reports on behalf of responsible parties. These reports are due in January and July of each year. Please refer to department publication *NR 700 Semi-Annual Site Progress Report, RR-082*, for more information.

### Submittals required under Wis. Admin. Code chs. NR 700 - 726

These documents, as applicable, must be submitted to the department prior to the responsible party requesting case closure, unless otherwise directed by the department:

- Ch. NR 708 reports and documentation for any immediate or interim actions.
- Ch. NR 712 professional certifications and signatures are included with applicable submittals.
- Ch. NR 716 work plan(s) and site investigation report.
- Ch. NR 722 remedial action options report (exception is for Dry Cleaners Environmental Response Fund sites), with the selected remedial action identified.
- Ch. NR 724 design, construction documentation, operation, maintenance and monitoring plans and reports, including vapor mitigation commissioning.
- Ch. NR 725 submittal(s) that confirms that continuing obligations have been identified and affected property owners have been notified by the responsible parties 30 days prior to case closure.
- If requesting case closure, the Ch. NR 726 case closure form and documentation substantiating compliance with the NR 700 rule series.
- Ch. NR 749 fees have been paid, as applicable, including closure and database fees.
- Ch. NR 700 semi-annual site progress reports starting six months after notification.

### **Additional Information:** [customize as needed]

The department tracks information on all cleanup sites in a department database available at [dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov) and search “BOTW”. The Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS) identification number for this site is listed at the top of this letter. You may view information related to your site on this database at any time.

All correspondence regarding this site should be directed to:

[DNR staff name]  
Remediation and Redevelopment Program  
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
P. O. Box [P.O. Box Number] [if applicable]  
[City, State and Zip Code]  
[DNR staff email address]

As previously noted, you are required to submit one paper copy and one electronic copy of plans and reports. To speed up processing, your correspondence should reference the BRRTS and Facility Identification (FID) numbers (if assigned) listed at the top of this letter.

Please visit the department’s Remediation and Redevelopment Program website at [dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov) and search “Brownfields”, for information on selecting a consultant, seeking financial assistance, and understanding the

investigation and cleanup process. Information regarding review fees, liability clarification letters, post-cleanup liability and more is also available.

Information on [enter items included here] is enclosed.

If you have questions, please call the [project manager] at [PM phone number] or [EPA name] at [EPA phone number] for more information.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

[PM\_NAME]  
[PM\_TITLE] - Remediation & Redevelopment Program  
[Name of region] Region

Enclosures: [customize as needed]

NR 700 Process and Timeline Overview, RR-967  
Selecting a Consultant, RR-502

**Optional:**

Environmental Services Contractor List, RR-024  
VPLE Fact Sheet #2, RR-506  
Environmental Contamination Basics, RR-674  
NR 700 Semi-Annual Site Progress Report, RR-082  
Wis. Admin. Code ch. NR 712 Qualifications and Certifications, RR-081  
Technical Assistance and Environmental Liability Clarification Request, Form 4400-237

**For LUST sites, if applicable (optional):**

Underground Storage Tanks, Clarifying Local Government Unit's Responsibility to Remove Tanks on Properties They Own, RR-627

**For drycleaner sites, if applicable (optional):**

Dry Cleaner Environmental Response Fund (DERF) – Frequently Asked Questions, RR-784

Dry Cleaner Environmental Response Fund (DERF) Program Highlights, RR-882

cc: [consultant name and address and/or other cc's]