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Subject: DEP Release: Christie Administration Continues Commitment to Accelerate Cleanups

IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

August 15, 2011

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CHRISTIE ADMINISTRATION CONTINUES COMMITMENT TO ACCELERATE CLEANUPS OF CONTAMINATED SITES

(11/P98) TRENTON -- The Department of Environmental Protection today proposed new rules that will accelerate the pace of contaminated site cleanups in New Jersey.

Upon adoption, the rules will culminate a three-year phase-in of the Site Remediation Reform Act, the law that provides sweeping changes to the way contaminated sites are investigated and cleaned up. That act established the DEP's Licensed Site Remediation Professional program.

"It is a priority of the Christie Administration to clean the more than 16,000 contaminated sites across the State," said Commissioner Martin. "This is an important step to help us more quickly and efficiently achieve that important goal. It will benefit public health and the environment, and will make underutilized properties available more quickly for redevelopment, benefiting economic growth."

"This fundamental shift is necessary because our old way of doing things was too cumbersome and inefficient, resulting in many cleanups that took far too long," said Commissioner Martin. "But I want to emphasize that all cleanups done under these new rules still must meet strict DEP compliance standards."

Developed with the cooperation and input of interested stakeholders, the proposed rules establish outcome-oriented criteria that must be used in the cleanup of contaminated sites, with a goal of ensuring the highest standards of protection of human health and the environment.

The rules establish cleanup targets that must be achieved within established time frames while providing flexibility to responsible parties in how to achieve those goals. Responsible parties will be required to report their progress in meeting milestones to the DEP, but they will not have to get DEP approval every step of the way, ensuring speedier cleanups.

"This rule package is an important milestone in transforming the site cleanup process from one that is dependent on DEP command-and-control to one in which highly qualified environmental consultants, known as Licensed Site Remediation Professionals (LSRP), will be responsible for making day-to-day decisions about investigation and remediation activities," said David Sweeney, DEP's Assistant Commissioner for Site Remediation.

"But it must be clear that those professionals and their activities will be closely monitored by the DEP," added Sweeney.

The law establishes a legal affirmative obligation on the part of responsible parties to address contamination under time frames set by the DEP. All contaminated site cases that are not directly overseen by the DEP must be handled by an LSRP by May 2012.

The law authorizes a 13-member Licensed Site Remediation Professional Board, which was established last fall, to issue licenses, investigate and take disciplinary action against LSRPs who do not adhere to New Jersey's strict standards and code of ethics. Those found not performing to these standards may be penalized with fines, license suspension or license revocation.

The rule was published today in the New Jersey Register. For a copy of the rule proposal, visit <http://www.nj.gov/dep/rules/notices.html> or <http://www.nj.gov/dep/srp/>

A public hearing will be Sept. 13 at 9 a.m. in the first floor public hearing room at the DEP building, 401 East State Street, Trenton.

Written comments may be submitted by Oct. 14 to Janis Hoagland, N.J Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Legal Affairs, Mail Code 401-041L; P.O. Box 402, 401 East State Street, 4th Floor, Trenton, NJ 08625-0402, ATTN:DEP Docket No. 12-11-07.

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