

Frequently Asked Questions

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Liability and Financial Themes

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How do I use this application? (link to Instructions)

How do I find WTM coordinates?

Finding WTM coordinates is easily done using RR Sites Map. The following steps allow you to find the coordinates for a specific location:

1. zoom in on the location on the interactive map, to a scale of at least 1:5000
2. click on the XY button
3. click the relevant location on the map again, and the WTM coordinates will appear on the left side of the screen and on the interactive map. This map may be printed by clicking on the Print tab, and saved in Adobe Acrobat® PDF format.

Please note that this application is best viewed with a display size of 800 x 600 pixels or higher.

How do I find the year of a digital air photo?

When you zoom in to a location to the scale of 1:40,000 or closer, the 2005 digital air photos will display in the map view. If Digital Air Photos (black and white) in Layers are selected instead, the year of the digital air photo is found by clicking on Identify for a selected location. The year of the air photo will appear in the results column to the left of the map view.

What does a point or symbol on the map mean?

The point or a symbol for a site on the map identifies that some type of action has taken place at that location. The basic intent of the point is to allow users to determine whether a specific property has had a release of a hazardous substance, or if a release may have occurred nearby, or if some other type of related action has occurred. While the map view provides a lot of information, it is best used with information from the tracking system, (Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS)).

The only way to know for sure whether a specific property or parcel has been affected by a release in the past is to review the information in the site file. Contacts for file information are available in BRRTS for each site, by clicking on the Identify/Site Info button once a site has been selected. Contact information is also found in RR Sites Map for the 3 agencies that have review cleanup actions; DNR, the Department of Commerce and the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.

In some cases a land use control may be in effect for a specific property. Most of these sites are found using the GIS Registry theme. Please see <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/rr/cleanup/obligations.htm> for further information on land use controls, and other actions which might be required after a cleanup has been completed.

How are sites located?

Sites are located by their Wisconsin Transverse Mercator (WTM) coordinates. Most sites are located as a point (one pair of X/Y coordinates). A 'site' may be one or more properties, all affected by the same source of contamination. Sites are generally located by a point on the property where the source of contamination originated – where the hazardous substance was originally released. This property is often called the source property.

For sites located as a point, one pair of coordinates is plotted on the source property. The coordinates are located either close to where the spill or discharge occurred, or near the center of the source property. For sites where more than one type of "action" occurs, the points are offset slightly from each other, so that all actions, with their labels, will show as you zoom in. Other sites, as detailed in the next answer, are located as polygons. The "corners" of the property are located by a series of WTM coordinates.

Why are some sites shown as polygons and some as points?

A polygon shows as the hatched outline of the property rather than a point on the map. Some sites are shown as polygons, such as Voluntary Party Liability Exemption (VPLE) sites, and General Liability Clarification Letter (GLC) sites in the Liability Limitations and Clarifications theme, because the liability protection is applied to a known property. Other sites, such as some Superfund National Priorities List (NPL) sites in the Liability Limitations and Clarifications theme, and Environmental Repair sites in the Contaminated and Cleaned Up Sites theme, are large and complex, and are mapped as a polygon for that reason. Site Assessment Grant (SAG) sites in the DNR Financial Actions theme are mapped as polygons, because multiple properties are sometimes included in the same grant award, even if they are not next to each other.

In the GIS Registry theme, both the source property and all properties still affected by the contamination at the time of the closure decision (site is cleaned up to state requirements) are located with separate points, and all properties are shown on the map.

How do I learn more...

- ...about [WTM \(Wisconsin Transverse Mercator\) coordinates](#) (see [map](#)).
- ...about particular sites with groundwater contamination, found in [BRRTS on the Web](#), a searchable online database.

- ...about the [Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment](#), contamination and GIS Registry sites.
- ...about internet mapping and geographic information systems applications from [DNR Geographic Information Systems \(GIS\)](#).

What are themes?

Themes are selected groups of layers, by a category. They are usually chosen to make viewing a category easier and finding information quicker. RR Sites Map is set up with 4 themes. Within any theme, the layers may be selected by clicking them on/off when in the Layers tab. More information on these themes is found on the "What Is RR Sites Map" page.

- Contaminated and Cleaned Up Sites
- GIS Registry
- Liability Limitations and Clarifications
- DNR Financial Actions

What sites are included in the Contaminated and Cleaned Up Sites theme?

Sites included in this theme are open (still subject to a cleanup action) and closed (cleanup action completed) sites in 2 general categories. Those categories are Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (LUST) and Environmental Repair Program (ERP) sites. These 2 categories include the vast majority of sites undergoing cleanups under the authority of the DNR, the Department of Commerce and the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. Spills are another large category of sites, where a limited cleanup action may have been taken. Spill sites are not included in this map application.

Information on the category of a specific site can be found by using the Identify/Site Info button, and clicking on the link to our tracking system, BRRTS on the Web.

IMPORTANT!

- Residual soil contamination appears on the Registry **only** for cleanup and case closure approvals granted **after** August 1, 2002.
- **Please carefully read the file documents pertaining to a given parcel.** They indicate exactly which parcel is being described, explain in detail the situation with respect to contamination and describe the nature of any use restrictions.
- Site locations shown in the interactive map are approximations only. They should NOT be interpreted as a legal representation of the location of a given property.
- Land use controls included in the closure letter, in place of deed restrictions, are included on the GIS Registry for sites closed after June 3, 2006.
- Deed restrictions for sites closed with a groundwater use restriction, and sites

closed with a deed restriction based on residual soil contamination since August, 2002 are included in the PDF for each site.

What is the online registry?

This system records sites closed with residual contamination in a computerized registry available to DNR staff and the public over the World Wide Web. Users can find properties in which they may be interested using an interactive map of the state, zooming in and out to find a location of interest. Users can also search by county or city, township or village. The registry allows users to view, print and download digital versions of documents relevant to the site including:

1. a legal description of the property
2. the letter approving case closure
3. any deed restrictions or land use controls applied to a property
4. tables, maps, etc. describing the nature and extent of contamination

The objective of this application is to make information on sites closed with residual contamination available to the public and DNR staff quickly and easily.

What sites are included in the GIS Registry?

Sites included in the GIS Registry include one or more properties at which the groundwater or soil has become contaminated, residual contamination remains above applicable standards after a cleanup action has been taken, and "closure" has been approved, with some exceptions. Closure means the state is satisfied with the steps that have been taken to stabilize/remediate the contamination. No further efforts are necessary. In some cases, the owner has agreed to a restriction or control on the legal uses of the property in exchange for not having to take further action for remediation. Restrictions and controls may affect well construction or other uses of the land and is binding upon whoever becomes the owner of the property.





The five types of sites in the GIS Registry are those:

1. closed with groundwater contamination above standards, and/or soil standards since August, 2002, without deed restrictions or controls,
2. closed with groundwater contamination above standards, and/or soil standards since August 2002, with a deed restriction (closed before 6/3/2006)
3. closed with residual soil and/or groundwater contamination and a land use control specified in the state-issued closure letter (closed after 6/3/2006).
4. sites where a monitoring well still needs to be located and properly abandoned, as a condition of closure
5. sites required to take an action to maintain a local government unit liability exemption, under s. 292.12 Stats.




What does it mean for a site to be listed on this GIS Registry?

While the RR Sites Map application provides a means of public notice regarding the status of a site, being included in the GIS Registry theme also means there may be some continuing obligations for an affected property owner. The following describes those general obligations:

1. For sites marked with the following:

-  Groundwater Contamination
-  Soil Contamination
-  Groundwater and Soil Contamination
-  Contamination came from another property

Wells to be constructed on or near these properties may require special well construction features. Prior to constructing or reconstructing a well on or near these properties, please contact the Department of Natural Resources, Bureau of Drinking Water and Groundwater to help determine what requirements may be necessary. (see the next question)

2. For sites marked with a  or  or :
Residual soil contamination may need to be treated or disposed of if excavated, and should be avoided during well construction. Precautions may be needed during excavation, or for construction on such properties due to residual contamination.
3. For sites closed with a deed restriction, or a land use control as outlined in the final closure letter, compliance with the land use control or deed restriction by the property owner is required, regardless of when the property was obtained. If changes to the land use control or deed restriction are desired, approval must first be obtained from the agency with administrative authority (the agency that approved closure).

How do I get approval for a water supply well at a site on the Registry?

A licensed well driller will need to submit a [GIS Registry Site Well Approval Application Form, DNR Form 3300-254](#). DNR's Drinking and Groundwater Program will review the form to determine whether special well construction features are necessary, and if so will specify those construction features.

How do I find out whether a specific property has a deed restriction or a land use control attached to it?

WI Act 418 became effective on June 3, 2006, and changed the way deed restrictions were used for closure of environmental cleanups. The bill added section 292.12, Wis. Stats., regarding the use of a database accessible to the public for sites closed with land

use restrictions detailed in the closure letter, instead of in a deed restriction. The GIS Registry acts as the database. Included in the GIS Registry are sites closed with deed restrictions prior to June 3, 2006, and sites closed with land use controls after June 3, 2006.

To find whether a site includes a property with a deed restriction, or a land use control, you need to open the link to the PDF for a site. The deed, and any recorded deed restriction will be included in the list of documents in this file. The file also contains the final closure letter and any required maintenance plans. The closure letter contains the details of any land use controls applied to those sites closing after June 3, 2006.

As with deed restrictions, these land use controls are binding on whoever is the owner of the property. In some cases, these land use controls, and maintenance of the control, is also binding on an occupant of a property.

For further information on land use controls, and other continuing obligations, see <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/rr/cleanup/obligations.htm>.

How do I get a property or site off the GIS Registry?

A request may be made to remove a property or site if residual contaminant levels on a specific property or on a site either fall below or are removed to levels below applicable standards. The applicable standards are found in Wis. Adm. Code NR 140, Groundwater Quality and NR 720, Soil Standards. Documentation may be submitted to the Department, with a fee of \$500 for removal of a property, or \$750 for removal of a site, for DNR review. A property may also be updated on the GIS Registry, in cases where a property has been subdivided to split off the portion of the original property that did not contain residual contamination. In this case, if documentation is provided to the Department regarding the new deed and legal description information, with a \$500 review fee, the Department can modify the property information on the GIS Registry, and provide a general liability clarification letter regarding the uncontaminated parcel. For further details, please see [Fees for GIS Modification](#) (pdf, 37K).

How do I learn more about liability limitation and clarification tools?

To learn more about liability clarification tools, go to the following website: <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/rr/liability/index.htm>

What types of financial assistance are available?

To learn more about financial tools available to help with remediation and redevelopment, go to the following website: <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/rr/financial/index.htm>

