

INNOVATIONS IN ADVANCED OXIDATION TO CONTROL EMERGING CONTAMINANTS IN WASTEWATER EFFLUENT

Linden, K.G. | Emerging Contaminants Summit, 10-11 March, Westminster, CO, 2020

Recent results from bench and pilot-scale studies highlight the emerging possibilities for advanced oxidation process-based control of contaminants in wastewater effluents. https://www.contaminantssummit.com/ext/resources/images/Presentations_Spoons-Brochure/Karl-Linden.pdf

Research

MERCURY POLLUTION AND CLEANUP IN THE SOUTH RIVER, VIRGINIA: UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF FATE AND TRANSPORT IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL REMEDIATION

Wilcox, D., M. Whitehurst, R. Atwood, P. Bsumek, and B. Wiggins. Case Studies in the Environment 96:226:1-10(2020)

As part of an effort to characterize industrial mercury pollution in the South River in Virginia, movement of mercury through the river ecosystem was studied for six years, and the findings were used to help design remedial projects to reduce mercury exposure to humans and wildlife. The case study can be used to introduce concepts of mercury pollution, fate and transport, and the decisions involved in designing environmental remediation projects. *This article is Open Access at* <https://online.ucpress.edu/casestudies/article/doi/10.1525/cse.2020.96.226.1> <https://doi.org/10.1525/cse.2020.96.226.1> <https://www.southriverscienceteam.org/>

A NATIONAL-SCALE ASSESSMENT OF MERCURY BIOACCUMULATION IN UNITED STATES NATIONAL PARKS USING DRAGONFLY LARVAE AS BIOSENTINELS THROUGH A CITIZEN-SCIENCE FRAMEWORK

Eagles-Smith, C.A., J.J. Willacker, S.J. Nelson, C.M. Flanagan Pritz, D.P. Krabbenhoft, et al. Environmental Science & Technology 54(14):8779-8790(2020)

Within a citizen-science network, dragonfly larvae were used as biosentinels to assess Hg bioaccumulation in aquatic ecosystems across >450 sites spanning 100 U.S. National Park Service units. The study examined intrinsic and extrinsic factors associated with variation in Hg concentrations. Relationships were used to develop an integrated impairment index of Hg risk to aquatic ecosystems and found that 12% of site-years exceeded high or severe benchmarks of fish, wildlife, or human health risk. <https://pubs.acs.org/doi/pdf/10.1021/acs.est.0c01255>

REACTIVE GAS PROCESS FOR IN SITU TREATMENT OF 1,2,3-TRICHLOROPROPANE IN VADOSE ZONE SOILS

Hatziger P.B., G. Lavorgna, S. Waisner, and C. Coyle. ESTCP Project ER-201632, 85 pp, 2020

The key objective of this project was to determine whether applying gaseous ammonia to unsaturated soils could effectively increase soil pH and subsequently treat 1,2,3-TCP and other halogenated propanes (HPs) and priority contaminants via alkaline hydrolysis. Microcosm studies showed that soil pH could increase to >10 using ammonia, effectively promoting hydrolysis of TCP and other HPs. However, flow-through columns with site soil indicated it would not be possible to quantify hydrolysis from volatile losses of target contaminants at field-scale due to the flow rate of ammonia required to increase soil pH. As a result, a planned field study was not performed. <https://www.serdp-estcp.org/content/download/51565/507013/file/ER-201632%20Final%20Report.pdf>

THE COMPLEX SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF TRICHLOROETHENE AND THE PROBABILITY OF NAPL OCCURRENCE IN THE ROCK MATRIX OF A MUDSTONE AQUIFER

Shapiro, A.M., D.J. Goode, T.E. Imbrigiotta, M.M. Lohar, and C. Tiedeman. Journal of Contaminant Hydrology 223:103478(2019)

Methanol extractions for chloroethene analyses were conducted on rock samples from seven closely spaced coreholes in a mudstone aquifer subjected to releases of TCE NAPL. While proximity to subhorizontal bedding plane fractures dictated TCE concentration in the rock matrix over the length of coreholes, elevated TCE concentrations in the rock matrix were not continuous along the most permeable bedding plane fractures. A complex configuration of subvertical and subhorizontal fractures seemed to be responsible for the TCE distribution from prior TCE releases at land surface. Most TCE was adsorbed to solid surfaces because of the large fraction of organic carbon (*f_{oc}*) in the mudstone. Large TCE content in some cores indicated the likely presence of the NAPL form of TCE in the rock matrix. Average values of porosity (*n*) and *f_{oc}* in phase partitioning calculations identified several locations of possible NAPL occurrence in the rock matrix and showed variability over several orders of magnitude. Accounting for the variability identified a probability of *P_{NAPL}*, the. The spatial variability of *P_{NAPL}* identified a configuration that may be attributed to a TCE source zone that has evolved after emplacement due to NAPL dissolution, adsorption, and matrix diffusion.

MINERAL REACTION KINETICS CONSTRAIN THE LENGTH SCALE OF ROCK MATRIX DIFFUSION

Wogelius, R.A., A.E. Milodowski, L.P. Field, R. Metcalfe, T. Lowe, A. van Veelen, et al. Scientific Reports 10:8142(2020)

A study was conducted to define the length scale over which rock matrix diffusion operates within crystalline rock over times relevant to assess radioactive and other long-lived wastes. Detailed chemical and structural analysis of natural specimens sampled at depth from the Toki Granite in Japan implied that, in many cases, the importance of rock matrix diffusion will be minimal. Additional analyses of a contrasting crystalline rock system at the Cammenellis Granite corroborated results. <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-020-65113-3>

HYDRAULIC RESPONSE TO EMULSIFIED VEGETABLE OIL BIOSTIMULATION: IN-SITU TEST IN A HIGHLY HETEROGENEOUS URANIUM CONTAMINATED AQUIFER

Adams, B.G., Master's Thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 88 pp, 2019

A study was conducted to determine whether emulsified vegetable oil (EVO) injections can reduce hydraulic conductivity and dissolved U in a previously treated U-contaminated aquifer. The study also tested for evidence of a "memory effect," a phenomenon where the second time an electron donor is injected, the environment responds to it faster. A 20% EVO and groundwater mixture was injected within the contaminated aquifer at the FRC Area 2 site at the Y-12 National Security Complex in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. Results show that injecting EVO can have unintended consequences related to hydraulic conductivity that can reduce EVO effectiveness or cause EVO treatment to fail. The effects of EVO interacting with aquifer media and injection well spacing should be carefully considered to minimize changes in preferential flow, limit oxidation of reduced uranium, and maximize the effectiveness of the treatment. Acetate concentrations indicated an accelerated response to EVO compared to the 2009 study results, which served as the only evidence of "memory response." <https://trace.tennessee.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=5685&context=etd-ir>

MERCURY SPECIATION AND REMEDIATION STRATEGIES AT A HISTORICALLY ELEMENTAL MERCURY SPILLED SITE

Matsumoto, M. and H. Liu. | Journal of Hazardous Materials 384:121351(2020)

This study quantified Hg speciation in a contaminated area 30 years after an elemental Hg spill and evaluated ex situ and in situ remediation strategies. Soil samples were taken across multiple sites at different soil depths. Most of the total Hg was distributed in surface soils at depths from 0-0.5 m and decreased exponentially with depth. In those surface soils, Hg existed in a potentially highly mobile chemical form suggesting that bioremediation and phytoremediation may be effective remediation techniques. In deep soils below 1 m, Hg predominantly existed in elemental form tightly bound to soil particles. While elemental Hg poses no immediate health risk, in situ thermal treatment may remove the fraction. Size fractionation data suggested that as an ex situ excavation cleanup option, reducing the volume of contaminated soils is possible by only selecting the sand and gravel size fractions of soil for offsite treatment.

CO-BIODEGRADATION STUDIES OF NAPHTHALENE AND PHENANTHRENE USING BACTERIAL CONSORTIUM

Parab, V. and M. Phadke.

Journal of Environmental Science and Health, Part A 55(7):912-924(2020)

Degradation studies of a phenanthrene and naphthalene mixture were conducted using a developed bacterial consortium that included *Chryseobacterium sp.*, *Sphingobacterium sp.*, *Stenotrophomonas sp.*, *Agromyces sp.*, and *Pseudomonas sp.* Results suggested that the pathway used for degradation was the meta-cleavage pathway. Within 80 used as a surfactant had a maximum effect on the growth of isolates during PAH degradation. In PAH in a laboratory-scale biofilm bioreactor, the bacterial consortium degraded 99.9% of naphthalene and 92.9% of phenanthrene in a 2000 mg/L mixture within six days.

GROUNDWATER CHARACTERIZATION AND MONITORING AT A COMPLEX INDUSTRIAL WASTE SITE USING ELECTRICAL RESISTIVITY IMAGING

Rochford, M., L., J. Rothberg, K. Parajuli, X. Song, Y. Xu, and T.C. Johnson. Hydrogeology Journal [Published online 9 May 2020 prior to print]

Electrical resistivity tomography (ERT) was used to evaluate a contaminated perched aquifer below an industrial waste site in Washington and determine the effectiveness of groundwater extraction for contaminant removal. The perched aquifer, located ~65 m below ground surface and ~10 m above the regional water table, contained high concentrations of nitrate, U, and other contaminants of concern. The study also investigated the effectiveness of using surface electrodes versus surface and horizontal subsurface electrodes for imaging groundwater extraction from the perched water aquifer. Results indicated that using horizontal subsurface electrode arrays could improve the ability of ERT to image deep subsurface features and monitor remediation activities under complex industrial waste sites. <https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/s10646-020-02167-1.pdf>

General News

TREATMENT OF AQUEOUS ARSENIC - A REVIEW OF BIOSORBENT PREPARATION METHODS

Bennis, K.Z., A.M. Damouh, K.N. McPhedran, and J. Solon.

Journal of Environmental Management 273:111126(2020)

This review includes an overview of 53 recent studies that assess a variety of biomass modification methods, such as activation with acids or bases and biomass-based composites, meant to overcome issues commonly experienced when using untreated biomass. Future perspectives are provided to assist in the further optimization of methods for biomass modifications to enhance As sorption capacities.

SUPERFUND REMEDY REPORT, SIXTEENTH EDITION

U.S. EPA, Office of Land and Emergency Management, EPA-542-R-20-001, July 2020

The 16th edition of the Superfund Remedy Report focuses on Superfund remedial actions selected in fiscal years 2015-2017. The report includes remedies selected in 272 decision documents (Records of Decision [RODs], ROD amendments, and Explanations of Significant Differences with changes to remedy components) signed in the 3-year period. Data are compiled on overall remedy selection and remedies for source materials (soil and sediment), surface water, groundwater, and air (i.e., vapor intrusion). This edition includes a new section summarizing groundwater technical impracticability waivers. <https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-07/documents/100002509.pdf>

RISK COMMUNICATION TOOLKIT

Interstate Technology & Regulatory Council (ITRC), Web-based document RCT-1, 2020

The ITRC Risk Communication Toolkit was developed by the PFAS, 1,4-Dioxane, and Harmful Cyanobacterial Blooms teams to help state personnel, other lead organizations, and stakeholders understand and communicate risk associated with emerging environmental issues and concerns. The toolkit contains an overview of risk communication concepts, steps to develop a risk communication plan and stakeholder outreach activities, guidance for drafting press releases and analytical result summary letters, case studies, and a risk communication plan template, and additional tools and case studies added and updated by ITRC teams as they are developed. <https://iri-1.itrcweb.org/> Also see YouTube video on risk communication created as part of the PFAS team training videos: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HqOaBip-5g8&feature=youtu.be>

PFAS FATE, TRANSPORT AND TREATMENT

Abriola, L.M. and T.K. Strathmann. SERDP & ESTCP Webinar Series, Webinar #116, July 2020

On July 23, SERDP and ESTCP sponsored a webinar to discuss approaches to better characterize PFAS fate and transport in the subsurface, as well as a novel technology for PFAS destruction. Specifically, investigators present results of experiments, mathematical modeling, and decision tool development to further understand PFAS fate and transport in the subsurface as well as a novel technology to treat PFAS in water and other high moisture content wastes. <https://www.serdp-estcp.org/Program-Areas/Training/Webinar-Series/07-23-2020>

ASSESSING THE ECOLOGICAL RISKS OF PER- AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES (PFAS) AT AQUEOUS FILM FORMING FOAM SITES WORKSHOP

Corder, J., J. Arblaster, and K. Bridges, SERDP & ESTCP Workshop, 9 March, Westminster, CO, 2020

The 3-hour, 5-chapter workshop provided an overview of ecological risk assessments for PFAS, including a state-of-the-science overview of the fate, exposure, and toxicity of PFAS in ecosystems. Presentations focused on the recently-released guidance document, "Guidance for Assessing the Ecological Risks of PFAS to Threatened and Endangered Species at Aqueous Film Forming Foam Impacted Sites" (<https://www.serdp-estcp.org/Program-Areas/Environmental-Restoration/ER-18-1614>). The workshop also provided a hands-on demonstration of the customizable ERA Model Tool that enables ecological risk assessors to enter site-specific data, such as concentrations of PFAS in sediment, water, soil, and/or biota, along with typical exposure factors for site-relevant wildlife species of interest and available toxicological information for common PFAS. See a video recording of all presentations on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=es65b51c6sk&list=PLMhSMj4dCm1sd07N8G3rUc0v0k>

INSIDE: AN EFFICIENT GUIDE FOR SUSTAINABLE REMEDIATION PRACTICE IN ADDRESSING CONTAMINATED SOIL AND GROUNDWATER

Naseri-Rad, M., R. Berndtsson, K.M. Persson, and K. Nakagawa. Science of The Total Environment 740:139879(2020)

The Influence based decision guide (INSIDE) is a methodology that considers realistic interactions among eight criteria to provide a one-time best option for choosing a remediation method for the project at hand and a management plan for further improvements of the system. INSIDE recognizes economic, environmental, social, and technological considerations for the most sustainable practice. The method was applied to a data-scarce case study in Iran to prioritize between remediation methods for contaminated groundwater aquifer. The case study shows that human health risk and environmental impacts are more influential than other evaluated criteria. <https://reader.elsevier.com/reader/pii/S0048969720333994?token=8FC0B590E909B8FE4FAEFC46452D0771DFE1F31EE48FE6879E2FA6808011F57890A7E98937C51182590320B4FE>

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