

## Soil and ground water sampling

The Southwest LRT Project Office is notifying property owners along the Southwest Light Rail Transit route (METRO Green Line Extension) to gain right of entry to test soil and ground water for potential contamination. Sampling started in fall 2014 and will continue through spring 2015 under state oversight. The project office will use the information obtained to select appropriate design options that protect human health and the environment during LRT construction, which will begin in 2016, and subsequent LRT operation, which is scheduled to begin in 2019.

### What to expect

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The Southwest LRT Project Office staff and consultants will review and coordinate the sites to be sampled, notify property owners prior to the field work, gain right of entry and coordinate with them to minimize disruption. Crews will mark underground utility lines near test sites and mark test locations with stakes and paint before testing crews arrive. The project office asks the public to please not remove the stakes.

Starting in fall 2014 and lasting into spring 2015, crews working weekdays will use the least invasive testing method possible. That method involves using truck-mounted drill rigs to drill 2- to 4-inch wide borings up to 25 feet deep or to the level of the ground water table. Depending on current and past land use and on the project's end use of a particular location, crews may need to use backhoes to dig test trenches in areas with contaminated soil. Trenches are typically 3 to 4 feet wide, up to 15 feet deep and 20 to 50 feet long.

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) will review the project's work plan for the sampling to ensure that proper procedures are followed.



*Soil boring equipment mounted on a truck.*

Crews will refill the holes and trenches, seeding previously sodded areas for re-vegetation in coordination with the property owners. In paved areas, borehole patching will be completed with like material. At present, no test trenches are planned for paved areas.

Trenches will be backfilled the same day they are opened and will not be left open overnight.

Noise associated with the work will be what one would expect to hear from an average medium-sized diesel truck engine.

Crews generally meet at 7:30 a.m. to set up, working until about 5 p.m. Work will not be done on weekends unless a business requests it.

## After sampling is finished

Laboratory tests will be conducted on samples to check for the presence of soil and/or ground water contamination and to determine its extent. Existing contamination on the corridor is both petroleum related, such as leaks from old gas stations, and non-petroleum related, such as dumped solvents and other chemicals from a variety of industries.

Additional sampling may be required later, based on the results of initial testing.

Strategies for managing contaminated soil and ground water will depend on the setting, risk associated with the setting and the contamination, and the infrastructure being built. This will be outlined in a plan that is implemented when construction occurs, and that has been approved by the MPCA.



Excavation of a test trench on industrial land where soil contamination is suspected.

If you have questions about soil and groundwater sampling or other activities related to the Southwest LRT Project, please contact the Southwest LRT Community Outreach Coordinator for your area (see map at right):

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## Learn more about Southwest LRT at [www.swlrt.org](http://www.swlrt.org)

Southwest LRT Community Outreach Coordinators:  
Outreach Areas

