

ITRC'S Vapor Intrusion Pathway: A Practical Guideline

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Over the last ten years, vapor intrusion has become a significant environmental issue for regulators, industry leaders, and concerned residents alike. Vapor intrusion is characterized as the migration of volatile chemicals from the subsurface into overlying structures. The simplicity of this definition belies the magnitude of resources being expended to address this complex exposure pathway across the country.

National guidance on the vapor intrusion pathway has been developed by the Interstate Technology & Regulatory Council (ITRC) through the combined effort of more than 100 professionals from state and federal regulatory agencies, consultants, environmental vendors, industry, and community stakeholders. The ITRC approach is outlined in the document, Vapor Intrusion Pathway: A Practical Guide.

Since various states express a wide range of comfort about the data types that are acceptable for assessing a site, the ITRC approach is not prescriptive as to the specific investigative tools or technical methodology appropriate. Rather, it is intended to assist the investigator in understanding the factors and techniques that may be used to assess the vapor intrusion pathway. The document also stresses the importance of a multiple lines of evidence approach over a single piece of data when a VI investigation is conducted. A comprehensive directory of mitigation methods is included with detailed information on passive and active building control remedies, institutional controls, ongoing monitoring and maintenance, sitewide approaches and closure.

This talk will touch on the main topics in the ITRC's Vapor Intrusion document and discuss many of the "lessons learned" by regulators about this complex pathway over the last decade.