

Region 4 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Laboratory Services and Applied Science Division Athens, Georgia	
Operating Procedure	
Title: Field Equipment Cleaning and Decontamination	ID: LSASDPROC-205-R4
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Purpose

This procedure is to be used by Region 4 Laboratory Services and Applied Science Division staff . This document describes general and specific procedures, methods and considerations to be used and observed when cleaning and decontaminating sampling equipment during the course of field investigations. This procedure is to be used by all Region 4 Laboratory Services and Applied Science Division (LSASD) staff.

Scope/Application

The procedures contained in this document are to be followed when field cleaning sampling equipment, for both re-use in the field, as well as used equipment being returned to the Field Equipment Center (FEC). On the occasion that LSASD field investigators determine that any of the procedures described in this section are either inappropriate, inadequate or impractical and that other procedures must be used to clean or decontaminate sampling equipment at a particular site, the variant procedure will be documented in the field logbook, along with a description of the circumstances requiring its use. Mention of trade names or commercial products in this operating procedure does not constitute endorsement or recommendation for use.

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1 General Information

1.1 Documentation/Verification

This procedure was prepared by persons deemed technically competent by LSASD management, based on their knowledge, skills and abilities and have been tested in practice and reviewed in print by a subject matter expert. The official copy of this procedure resides on the LSASD Local Area Network (LAN). The Document Control Coordinator (DCC) is responsible for ensuring the most recent version of the procedure is placed on LAN and for maintaining records of review conducted prior to its issuance.

1.2 Definitions

- Decontamination: The process of cleaning dirty sampling equipment to the degree to which it can be re-used, with appropriate QA/QC, in the field.
- Deionized water: Tap water that has been treated by passing through a standard deionizing resin column. At a minimum, the finished water should contain no detectable heavy metals or other inorganic compounds (i.e., at or above analytical detection limits) as defined by a standard inductively coupled Argon Plasma Spectrophotometer (ICP) (or equivalent) scan. Deionized water obtained by other methods is acceptable, as long as it meets the above analytical criteria. Organic-free water may be substituted for deionized water.
- Detergent shall be a standard brand of phosphate-free laboratory detergent such as Liquinox® or Luminox®. Liquinox® is a traditional anionic laboratory detergent and is used for general cleaning and where there is concern for the stability of the cleaned items in harsher cleaners. Luminox® is a specialized detergent with the capability of removing oils and organic contamination. It is used in lieu of a solvent rinse step in cleaning of equipment for trace contaminant sampling. Where not specified in these procedures, either detergent is acceptable.
- Drilling Equipment: All power equipment used to collect surface and sub-surface soil samples or install wells. For purposes of this procedure, direct push is also included in this definition.
- Field Cleaning: The process of cleaning dirty sampling equipment such that it can be returned to the FEC in a condition that will minimize the risk of transfer of contaminants from a site.
- Organic-free water: Tap water that has been treated with activated carbon and deionizing units. At a minimum, the finished water must meet the analytical criteria of deionized water and it should contain no detectable pesticides, herbicides, or extractable organic compounds, and no volatile organic compounds above minimum detectable levels as determined by the Region 4 laboratory for a given set of analyses. Organic-free water obtained by other methods is acceptable, as long as it meets the above analytical criteria.
- Tap water: Water from any potable water supply. Deionized water or organic-free water may be substituted for tap water.

1.3 General Precautions

1.3.1 Safety

Proper safety precautions must be observed when field cleaning or decontaminating dirty sampling equipment. Refer to the LSASD Safety, Health and Environmental Management Program (SHEMP) Procedures and Policy Manual and any pertinent site-specific Health and Safety Plans (HASPs) for guidelines on safety precautions. These guidelines, however, should only be used to complement the judgment of an experienced professional. Address chemicals that pose specific toxicity or safety concerns and follow any other relevant requirements, as appropriate. At a minimum, the following precautions should be taken in the field during these cleaning operations:

- When conducting field cleaning or decontamination using laboratory detergent, safety glasses with splash shields or goggles, and latex gloves will be worn.
- No eating, smoking, drinking, chewing, or any hand to mouth contact should be permitted during cleaning operations.

1.3.2 Procedural Precaution

Prior to mobilization to a site, the expected types of contamination should be evaluated to determine if the field cleaning and decontamination activities will generate rinses and other waste waters that might be considered RCRA hazardous waste or may require special handling.

2 Introduction to Field Equipment Cleaning and Decontamination

2.1 General

The procedures outlined in this document are intended for use by field investigators for cleaning and decontaminating sampling and other equipment in the field. These procedures should be followed in order that equipment is returned to the FEC in a condition that will minimize the risk of transfer of contaminants from a site.

Sampling and field equipment cleaned in accordance with these procedures must meet the minimum requirements for the Data Quality Objectives (DQOs) of the study or investigation. If deviations from these procedures need to be made during the course of the field investigation, they will be documented in the field logbook along with a description of the circumstances requiring the use of the variant procedure.

Cleaning procedures for use at the Field Equipment Center (FEC) are found in LSASD Operating Procedure for Equipment Cleaning and Decontamination at the FEC (LSASDPROC-206).

2.2 Handling Practices and Containers for Cleaning Solutions

Improperly handled cleaning solutions may easily become contaminated. Storage and application containers must be constructed of the proper materials to ensure their integrity. Following are acceptable materials used for containing the specified cleaning solutions:

- Detergent must be kept in clean plastic, metal, or glass containers until used. It should be poured directly from the container during use.
- Tap water may be kept in tanks, hand pressure sprayers, squeeze bottles, or applied directly from a hose.
- Deionized water must be stored in clean, glass or plastic containers that can be closed for transport. It can be applied from plastic squeeze bottles.
- Organic-free water must be stored in clean glass or Teflon® containers prior to use. It may be applied using Teflon® squeeze bottles, or with the portable system.

2.3 Disposal of Cleaning Solutions

Procedures for the safe handling and disposition of investigation derived waste (IDW); including used wash water and rinse water are in LSASD Operating Procedure for Management of Investigation Derived Waste (LSASDPROC-202).

2.4 Sample Collection Equipment Contaminated with Concentrated Materials

Equipment used to collect samples of concentrated materials from investigation sites must be field cleaned before returning from the study. At a minimum, this should consist of washing with detergent and rinsing with tap water. When the above procedure cannot be followed, the following options are acceptable:

- Leave with facility for proper disposal;
- If possible, containerize, seal, and secure the equipment and leave on-site for later disposal;
- Containerize, bag, or seal the equipment so that no odor is detected and return to the Field Equipment Center.

It is the project leader's responsibility to evaluate the nature of the sampled material and determine the most appropriate cleaning procedures for the equipment used to sample that material.

2.5 Sample Collection Equipment Contaminated with Environmental Media

Equipment used to collect samples of environmental media from investigation sites should be field cleaned before returning from the study. Based on the condition of the sampling equipment, one or more of the following options must be used for field cleaning:

- Wipe the equipment clean;
- Water-rinse the equipment;
- Wash the equipment in detergent and water followed by a tap water rinse.
- For grossly contaminated equipment, the procedures set forth in Section 2.4 must be followed.

Under extenuating circumstances such as facility limitations, regulatory limitations, or during residential sampling investigations where field cleaning operations are not feasible, equipment can be containerized, bagged or sealed so that no odor is detected and returned to the FEC without being field cleaned. If possible, FEC personnel should be notified that equipment will be returned without being field cleaned. It is the project leader's responsibility to evaluate the nature of the sampled material and determine the most appropriate cleaning procedures for the equipment used to sample that material.

2.6 Handling of Decontaminated Equipment

After decontamination, equipment should be handled only by personnel wearing clean gloves to prevent re-contamination. In addition, the equipment should be moved away (preferably upwind) from the decontamination area to prevent re-contamination. If the equipment is not to be immediately re-used, it should be covered with plastic sheeting or wrapped in aluminum foil to prevent re-contamination. The area where the equipment is kept prior to re-use must be free of contaminants.

3 Field Equipment Decontamination Procedures

3.1 General

Sufficient equipment should be transported to the field so that an entire study can be conducted without the need for decontamination. When equipment must be decontaminated in the field, the following procedures are to be utilized.

Note: Equipment utilized for PFAS sampling will not be cleaned in the field.

3.2 Specifications for Decontamination Pads

Decontamination pads constructed for field cleaning of sampling and drilling equipment should meet the following minimum specifications:

- The pad should be constructed in an area known or believed to be free of surface contamination.
- The pad should not leak.
- If possible, the pad should be constructed on a level, paved surface and should facilitate the removal of wastewater. This may be accomplished by either constructing the pad with one corner lower than the rest, or by creating a sump or pit in one corner or along one side. Any sump or pit should also be lined.
- Sawhorses or racks constructed to hold equipment while being cleaned should be high enough above ground to prevent equipment from being splashed.
- Water should be removed from the decontamination pad frequently.
- A temporary pad should be lined with a water impermeable material with no seams within the pad. This material should be either easily replaced (disposable) or repairable.

At the completion of site activities, the decontamination pad should be deactivated. The pit or sump should be backfilled with the appropriate material designated by the site project leader, but only after all waste/rinse water has been pumped into containers for disposal. See LSASD Operating Procedure for Management of Investigation Derived Waste (LSASDPROC-202) for proper handling and disposal of these materials. If the decontamination pad has leaked excessively, soil sampling may be required.

3.3 "Classical Parameter" Sampling Equipment

"Classical Parameters" are analyses such as oxygen demand, nutrients, certain inorganic compounds, sulfide, flow measurements, etc. For routine operations involving classical parameter analyses, water quality sampling equipment such as Kemmerers, buckets, dissolved oxygen dunkers, dredges, etc., may be cleaned with the sample water or tap water between sampling locations as appropriate.

Flow measuring equipment such as weirs, staff gages, velocity meters, and other stream gauging equipment may be cleaned with tap water between measuring locations, if necessary.

Note: The procedures described in Section 3.3 are not to be used for cleaning field equipment to be used for the collection of samples undergoing trace organic or inorganic constituent analyses.

3.4 Sampling Equipment used for the Collection of Trace Organic and Inorganic Compounds

For samples undergoing trace organic or inorganic constituent analyses, the following procedures are to be used for all sampling equipment or components of equipment that come in contact with the sample:

3.4.1 Standard LSASD Method

- An optional Liquinox[®] detergent wash step may be useful to remove gross dirt and soil.
- Clean with tap water and Luminox[®] detergent using a brush, if necessary, to remove particulate matter and surface films.
- Rinse thoroughly with tap water.
- Rinse thoroughly with organic-free water and place on a clean foil-wrapped surface to air-dry.
- Wrap the dry equipment with aluminum foil or bag in clean plastic. If the equipment is to be stored overnight before it is wrapped in foil, it should be covered and secured with clean, unused plastic sheeting.

3.4.2 Alternative Solvent Rinse Method

The historical solvent rinse method of cleaning equipment for trace contaminant sampling remains an acceptable method.

- Clean with tap water and Liquinox[®] detergent using a brush, if necessary, to remove particulate matter and surface films. Equipment may be steam cleaned (Liquinox[®] detergent and high-pressure hot water) as an alternative to brushing. Sampling equipment that is steam cleaned should be placed on racks or saw horses at least two feet above the floor of the decontamination pad. PVC or plastic items should not be steam cleaned.
- Rinse thoroughly with tap water.

- Rinse thoroughly with deionized water.
- Rinse with an appropriate solvent (generally isopropanol).
- Rinse with organic-free water and place on a clean foil-wrapped surface to air-dry.
- Wrap the dry equipment with aluminum foil or plastic. If the equipment is to be stored overnight before it is wrapped, it should be covered and secured with clean, unused plastic sheeting.

3.5 Well Sounders or Tapes

The following procedures are recommended for decontaminating well sounders (water level indicators) and tapes. Unless conditions warrant, it is only necessary to decontaminate the wetted portion of the sounder or tape.

- Wash with Liquinox[®] detergent and tap water.
- Rinse with tap water.
- Rinse with deionized water.

3.6 Redi-Flo2[®] Pump

CAUTION – Do not wet the controller. Always disconnect power from the pump when handling the pump body.

The Redi-Flo2[®] pump and any associated connected hardware (e.g., check valve) should be decontaminated between each monitoring well. The following procedures are required, depending on whether the pump is used solely for purging or used for purging and sampling.

3.6.1 Purge Only (Pump and Wetted Portion of Tubing or Hose)

- Disconnect power and wash exterior of pump and wetted portion of the power lead and tubing or hose with Liquinox[®] detergent and water solution.
- Rinse with tap water.
- Final rinse with deionized water.
- Place pump and reel in a clean plastic bag and keep tubing or hose contained in clean plastic or galvanized tub between uses.

3.6.2 Purge And Sample

Grundfos Redi-Flo2® pumps are extensively decontaminated and tested at the FEC to prevent contamination from being transmitted between sites. The relevant sections of LSASDPROC-206, *Field Equipment Cleaning and Decontamination at the FEC*, should be implemented in the field where a high risk of cross-contamination exists, such as where NAPL or high-concentration contaminants occur. In most cases, the abbreviated cleaning procedure described below will suffice, provided that sampling proceeds from least to most contaminated areas.

- Disconnect and discard the previously used sample tubing from the pump. Remove the check valve and tubing adapters and clean separately (See Section 3.6.3 for check valve). Wash the pump exterior with detergent and water.
- Prepare and fill three containers with decontamination solutions, consisting of Container #1, a tap water/detergent washing solution. Luminox® is commonly used. An additional pre-wash container of Liquinox® may be used; Container #2, a tap water rinsing solution; and Container #3, a deionized or organic-free water final rinsing solution. Choice of detergent and final rinsing solution for all steps in this procedure is dependent upon project objectives (analytes and compounds of interest). The containers should be large enough to hold the pump and one to two liters of solution. An array of 2' long 2" PVC pipes with bottom caps is a common arrangement. The solutions should be changed at least daily.
- Place the pump in Container #1. Turn the pump on and circulate the detergent and water solution through the pump and then turn the pump off.
- Place the pump in Container #2. Turn the pump on and circulate the tap water through the pump and then turn the pump off.
- Place the pump in Container #3. Turn the pump on and circulate deionized or organic-free water through the pump and then turn the pump off.
- Disconnect power and remove pump from Container #3. Rinse exterior and interior of pump with fresh deionized or organic-free water.
- Decontaminate the power lead by washing with detergent and water, followed by tap water and deionized water rinses. This step may be performed before washing the pump if desired.
- Reassemble check valve and tubing adapters to pump. ALWAYS use Teflon® tape to prevent galling of threads. Firm hand-tightening of fittings or light wrench torque is generally adequate.
- Place the pump and reel in a clean plastic bag.

3.6.3 Redi-Flo2® Ball Check Valve

- Remove the ball check valve from the pump head. Check for wear and/or corrosion, and replace as needed. During decontamination check for free-flow in forward direction and blocking of flow in reverse direction.
- Using a brush, scrub all components with detergent and tap water.

- Rinse with deionized water.
- Rethread the ball check valve to the Redi-Flo2® pump head.

3.7 Mega-Monsoon® and GeoSub® Electric Submersible Pump

As these pumps have lower velocities in the turbine section and are easier to disassemble in the field than Grundfos pumps, the outer pump housing should be removed to expose the impeller for cleaning prior to use and between each use when used as a sampling pump for trace contaminant sampling.

- Remove check valves and adapter fittings and clean separately.
- Remove the outer motor housing by holding the top of the pump head and unscrewing the outer housing from its O-ring sealed seat.
- Clean all pump components per the provisions of section 3.4. Use a small bottle brush for the pump head passages
- Wet the O-ring(s) on the pump head with organic-free water. Reassemble the outer pump housing to the pump head.
- Clean cable and reel per Section 3.4.
- Conduct final rinse of pump with organic-free water over pump and through pump turbine.

3.8 Bladder Pumps

Bladder pumps are presumed to be intended for use as low flow purge-and-sample pumps. The Geotech® bladder pump and Geoprobe Systems® mechanical bladder pump can be cleaned similarly.

- Discard any tubing returned with the pump.
- Completely disassemble the pump, being careful to note the initial position of and retain any springs and loose ball checks.
- Discard pump bladder.
- Clean all parts as per the standard cleaning procedure in Section 3.4.
- Install a new Teflon® bladder and reassemble pump.

3.9 Downhole Drilling Equipment

While LSASD does not currently operate drilling equipment, LSASD personnel do oversee and specify drilling operations. The following procedures are to be used for drilling activities involving the collection of soil samples for trace organic and inorganic constituent analyses and for the construction of monitoring wells to be used for the collection of groundwater samples for trace organic and inorganic constituent analyses.

3.9.1 Introduction

Cleaning and decontamination of all equipment should occur at a designated area (decontamination pad) on the site. The decontamination pad should meet the specifications of Section 3.2 of this procedure.

Tap water brought on the site for drilling and cleaning purposes should be contained in a pre-cleaned tank.

A steam cleaner and/or high pressure hot water washer capable of generating a pressure of at least 2500 PSI and producing hot water and/or steam, with a detergent compartment, should be obtained.

3.9.2 Preliminary Cleaning and Inspection

Drilling equipment should be clean of any contaminants that may have been transported from off-site to minimize the potential for cross-contamination. The drilling equipment should not serve as a source of contaminants. Associated drilling and decontamination equipment, well construction materials, and equipment handling procedures should meet these minimum specified criteria:

- All downhole augering, drilling, and sampling equipment should be sandblasted before use if painted, and/or there is a buildup of rust, hard or caked matter, etc., that cannot be removed by steam cleaning (detergent and high pressure hot water), or wire brushing. Sandblasting should be performed prior to arrival on site, or well away from the decontamination pad and areas to be sampled.
- Any portion of the drilling equipment that is over the borehole (kelly bar or mast, backhoe buckets, drilling platform, hoist or chain pulldowns, spindles, cathead, etc.) should be steam cleaned (detergent and high pressure hot water) and wire brushed (as needed) to remove all rust, soil, and other material which may have come from other sites before being brought on site.
- Printing and/or writing on well casing, tremie tubing, etc., should be removed before use. Emery cloth or sand paper can be used to remove the printing and/or writing. Most well material suppliers can provide materials without the printing and/or writing if specified when ordered. Items that cannot be cleaned are not acceptable and should be discarded.
- Equipment associated with the drilling and sampling activities should be inspected to insure that all oils, greases, hydraulic fluids, etc., have been removed, and all seals and gaskets are intact with no fluid leaks.

3.9.3 Drill Rig Field Cleaning Procedure

Any portion of the drill rig, backhoe, etc., that is over the borehole (kelly bar or mast, backhoe buckets, drilling platform, hoist or chain pulldowns, spindles, cathead, etc.) should be steam cleaned (detergent and high pressure hot water) between boreholes.

3.9.4 Field Decontamination Procedure for Drilling Equipment

The following is the standard procedure for field cleaning augers, drill stems, rods, tools, and associated equipment. This procedure does not apply to well casings, well screens, or split-spoon samplers used to obtain samples for chemical analyses, which should be decontaminated as outlined in Section 3.4 of this procedure.

- Wash with tap water and detergent, using a brush if necessary, to remove particulate matter and surface films. Steam cleaning (high pressure hot water with detergent) may be necessary to remove matter that is difficult to remove with the brush. Drilling equipment that is steam cleaned should be placed on racks or saw horses at least two feet above the floor of the decontamination pad. Hollow-stem augers, drill rods, etc., that are hollow or have holes that transmit water or drilling fluids, should be cleaned on the inside with vigorous brushing.
- Rinse thoroughly with tap water.
- Remove from the decontamination pad and cover with clean, unused plastic if not used immediately. If stored overnight, the plastic should be secured to ensure that it stays in place.

3.9.5 Field Decontamination Procedure for Direct Push Technology (DPT) Equipment

- Certain specific procedures for the decontamination of DPT tools are described in the various sampling procedures, but the following general guidelines apply:
- Prior to return to the Field Equipment Center, all threaded tool joints should be broken apart and the equipment cleaned per the provisions of *Section 2.5, Sample Collection Equipment Contaminated with Environmental Media* of this procedure.
- Equipment that contacts the sample media and is cleaned in the field for reuse should be cleaned per the provisions of *Section 3.4, Sampling Equipment used for the Collection of Trace Organic and Inorganic Compounds* of this procedure. This would include piston sampler points and shoes, screen point sampler screens and sheaths, and the drive rods when used for groundwater sampling.
- Equipment that does not directly contact the sample media and is cleaned in the field for reuse can generally be cleaned per the provisions of *Section 3.7.4, Field Decontamination Procedure for Drilling Equipment* of this procedure.
- Stainless steel SP15/16 well screens require special care as the narrow slots are difficult to clean under even controlled circumstances and galvanic corrosion can release chrome from the screen surface. As soon as possible after retrieval, the screen slots should be sprayed from the outside to break loose as much material as possible before it can dry in place. To prevent galvanic corrosion, the screens must be segregated from the sampler sheaths, drive rods, and other carbon steel during return transport from the field.

3.10 Rental Pumps

Completing a groundwater sampling project may require the use of rental pumps. Rental pumps are acceptable where they are of suitable stainless steel and Teflon® construction. These pumps should be cleaned prior to use using the procedures specified herein and a rinse-blank collected prior to use.

4 References

LSASD Operating Procedure for Management of Investigation Derived Waste, LSASDPROC-202, Most Recent Version

LSASD Operating Procedure for Equipment Cleaning and Decontamination at the FEC, LSASDPROC-206, Most Recent Version

US EPA. Safety, Health and Environmental Management Program Procedures and Policy Manual. Region 4 LSASD, Athens, GA, Most Recent Version

Revision History

The top row of this table shows the most recent changes to this controlled document. For previous revision history information, archived versions of this document are maintained by the LSASD Document Control Coordinator on the LSASD local area network (LAN).

History	Effective Date
<p>LSASDPROC-205-R4, <i>Field Equipment Cleaning and Decontamination</i>, replaces SESDPROC-205-R3</p> <p>General: Updated format, Division and Branch names and naming conventions post agency re-alignment.</p> <p>Section 3.1: Added note that PFAS sampling equipment will not be cleaned in the field.</p> <p>Clarified in Section 3.9 that LSASD does not performing drilling activities.</p>	<p>June 22, 2020</p>
<p>SESDPROC-205-R3, <i>Field Equipment Cleaning and Decontamination</i>, replaces SESDPROC-205-R2.</p> <p>Cover Page: The author was changed to Brian Striggow. LSASD's reorganization was reflected in the authorization section by making John Deatrick the Chief of the Field Services Branch. The FQM was changed from Bobby Lewis to Hunter Johnson.</p> <p>Revision History: Changes were made to reflect the current practice of only including the most recent changes in the revision history.</p> <p>General: Corrected any typographical, grammatical and/or editorial errors.</p> <p>Section 1.4: Differentiate between Liquinox® and Luminox® detergents.</p> <p>Section 3.4: Restore solvent rinse as alternative cleaning method.</p> <p>Section 3.7: Added section on cleaning of 12 Volt electric submersible pumps.</p> <p>Section 3.8: Added section on cleaning of bladder pumps.</p> <p>Section 3.9: Added language on cleaning and transport of SP15/16 screens</p> <p>Section 3.10: Added section on cleaning of rental pumps</p>	<p>December 18, 2015</p>
<p>SESDPROC-205-R2, <i>Field Equipment Cleaning and Decontamination</i>, replaces SESDPROC-205-R1.</p>	<p>December 20, 2011</p>
<p>SESDPROC-205-R1, <i>Field Equipment Cleaning and Decontamination</i>, replaces SESDPROC-205-R0.</p>	<p>November 1, 2007</p>

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