

Steps in Risk Assessment:

1. Data Collection and Evaluation:

During the data collection and evaluation step of the risk assessment, site data relevant to human health and ecological evaluation are gathered and analyzed to address the contaminants of potential concern (COPC) that were identified by [risk-based](#) and background screening.

This guidance addresses risk assessment steps but assumes that quality control/quality assurance, additional data quality and QAPP requirements are met. COPCs are defined as those constituents detected in environmental media (e.g. soil, groundwater, air, sediment) at concentrations above risk-based screening levels and background. In addition, non-detected constituents that have the detection limits higher than the [screening values](#) may also be considered COPCs. The COPCs must be carried through to a quantitative risk assessment unless the facility proposes a removal or decontamination action based on acceptable cleanup levels. If necessary, the non-detected COPCs should be carried forward for further evaluation at ½ detection limit. COPCs that exceed a screening level that is not entirely risk-based (such as an [MCL](#)) should still be included in the baseline risk assessment to allow for full characterization of increased risk due to releases at the site. For ecological impacts, contaminants exceeding [ecological screening values](#) should be retained.