

GEOTECHNICAL CONSULTING SERVICES

COAL COMBUSTION RESIDUALS (CCR) SURFACE IMPOUNDMENT SYSTEM HAZARD POTENTIAL CLASSIFICATION

DEERHAVEN GENERATING STATION (DGS) 10001 NW 13th STREET GAINESVILLE, ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA

> PROJECT NO. 0230.1500077 REPORT NO. 1352241

Prepared For:

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Prepared By:

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October 12, 2016

Consultants in: Geotechnical Engineering • Environmental Sciences • Construction Materials Testing Offices in: Orlando • Gainesville • Ocala • Fort Myers • Merritt Island • Daytona Beach • West Palm Beach



October 12, 2016

Innovative Waste Consulting Services, LLC 6628 NW 9th Boulevard, Suite 3 Gainesville, FL 32608

Attention: Dr. Pradeep Jain, PhD., P.E.

Reference: **Report of Geotechnical Consulting Services** – Deerhaven Generating Station CCR Impoundment Hazard Potential Classification 10001 NW 13th Street Gainesville, Alachua County, Florida UES Project No. 0230.1500077 UES Report No. 1352241

Dear Dr. Jain:

Universal Engineering Sciences, Inc. (UES) has completed the geotechnical engineering services for the subject project in Gainesville, Alachua County, Florida. This geotechnical Report is submitted in satisfaction of the contracted scope of services as summarized in UES Proposal No. 1333308v2, dated June 14, 2016.

The following report presents the results of our Hazard Potential Classification Assessment of the surface impoundment system at the Deerhaven Generating Station (DGS). This plan was prepared under the supervision, direction and control of the undersigned registered professional engineer (PE). The hazard potential classification assessment presented in this report was conducted in accordance with the requirements of 40 CFR 257.73(a)(2). The undersigned PE is familiar with the requirements of 40 CFR 257.73(a)(2).

We appreciate the opportunity to have worked with you on this project and look forward to a continued association. Please contact us if you have any questions, or if we may further assist you as your plans proceed.

Sincerely,

UNIVERSAL ENGINEERING SCIENCES, INC.

Certificate of Authorization Number 549

Timothy Kwiatkowski, El Staff Geotechnical Engineer Eduardo Suarez, P.E. Senior Geotechnical Engineer Florida P.E. No. 60272 Date: DGS CCR Surface Impoundment System Hazard Potential Classification UES Project No. 0230.1500077 Date: October 12, 2016

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Universal Engineering Sciences, Inc. (UES) has completed a hazard potential classification, for the Coal Combustion Residuals (CCR) surface impoundment system (i.e., Ash Cell #1, Ash Cell #2) at the Deerhaven Generating Station (DGS) in Gainesville, Alachua County, Florida.

The subject site is located within Sections 26 and 27, Township 8 South, Range 19 East in Gainesville, Alachua County, Florida. DGS is located approximately 1.25 miles north of NW 43rd Street along the north side of US HWY 441, in Gainesville, Alachua County, Florida. More specifically, the property is an approximately 930-acre parcel of land located at 10001 NW 13th Street in Gainesville, Alachua County, Florida.

The CCR surface impoundment system is part of a larger group of six process ponds: the two impoundment system ash ponds, two pump-back ponds, and two front-end treatment lime sludge ponds. The surface impoundment system is situated just northwest of the generating facility. The surface impoundment system is connected to the main plant by asphalt roads. The surface impoundment system area is approximately 5.2 acres and is adjacent to wooded areas. The maximum elevation of the ash pond embankments is 195 feet according to the National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929 (NGVD 29), which is nearly 150 feet above the potentiometric surface level. The slopes vary in steepness from 3H: 1V to 4H: 1V throughout the sides of the ash pond area. The slopes are vegetated with grass along the exterior, and covered with rock/boulders along the interior slopes. Moderately dense wooded areas surround much of DGS. There are some water management areas/swales at the south side of the process pond area.

CDM Smith had previously conducted a site assessment of the Coal Combustion Waste impoundments at the DGS plant. Contracted by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), CDM Smith prepared an "Assessment of Dam Safety of Coal Combustion Surface Impoundments Final Report; Dated May 2014. Based on the CDM Smith report, an Impoundment Hazard classification of "Low Hazard" rating was assigned to the impoundments (CDM Smith, 2014).

2.0 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF SERVICES

2.1 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the results of the initial CCR surface impoundment system hazard potential classification assessment. The scope of services included a visual assessment of the site and each pond unit, interviews with facility personnel, a review of geotechnical reports and studies conducted related to the design and construction of the ash ponds, and a review of a previous hazard potential assessment report.

This report analyzes the possible adverse incremental consequences that result from the release of water or stored contents due to failure or mis-operation of the surface impoundment system or its appurtenances. This report follows the rating system recommended by EPA in the assessment reports of structural stability of Dams as modeled after the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Dam Safety Guidelines. The Hazard Potential Classification is based on the National Inventory of Dams Criteria as used by EPA.

3.0 CONCLUSIONS

Mis-operation or failure of the surface impoundment system embankment would release a small volume of water and would likely result in no probable loss of human life and low economic and/or environmental losses. Thus, according to the hazard potential classification used by EPA, the impoundment system would be classified as "Low Hazard Potential".

4.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE COAL COMBUSTION WASTE RESIDUALS SURFACE IMPOUNDMENT SYSTEM

4.1 Location and General Description

The CCR surface impoundment system is located at 10001 US 441 in Gainesville, Alachua County, Florida. The impoundment system is located to the northwest of the main plant at DGS. The surface impoundment system is comprised of two ponds (i.e., Ash Cell #1, Ash Cell #2) which are located in the vicinity of four additional, non-CCR process water ponds. An overall site layout map plan of the plant is included in **Appendix A-1**.

The top elevation of the dike surrounding the impoundment system is at about +195 NGVD 29, and the bottom the embankments are at an approximate elevation of +180 feet NGVD 29. The bottom of the ash cell ponds is at an elevation of roughly +179 feet NGVD 29. A topographic survey of the pond is included in **Appendix A**.

Table 4.1: Impoundment Pond Summary		
	Ash Cells #1 and #2	
Embankment Height (ft)	14	
Crest Width (ft)	25	
Length (ft)	365	
Interior Slopes H:V	3:1	
Exterior Slopes H:V	4:1	

4.2 <u>Coal Combustion Residuals Handling</u>

The CCR surface impoundment system receives ash sluice water and a variety of additional plant process water streams (e.g., cooling water blowdown, water collected from plant drains). While the impoundment system acts as a settling basin to allow the precipitation of bottom ash, it also serves to temporarily retain other process waters prior to onsite treatment and reuse. DGS is operated as a "zero liquid discharge" facility.

4.2.1 Ash Pond Operation and Bottom Ash

Bottom ash is conveyed by pipeline to Ash Cells #1 and #2, as a slurry. The bottom ash settles, and the ash ponds are occasionally excavated to remove and relocate ash to the on-site CCR landfill for disposal.

4.3 Size and Hazard Classification

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Guidelines for Safety Inspection of Dams (1979) has been organized by size, as seen below in Table 4.2 (USACE, 1979).

Table 4.2: USACE ER 1110-2-106 Size Classification		
Category	Storage (Ac-ft)	Height (ft)
Small	50 to < 1,000	25 to < 40
Intermediate	1,000 to < 50,000	40 to < 100
Large	> 50,000	> 100

Due to the height of the impoundment system and its storage capacity, the impoundment system is considered small.

EPA has established a hazard potential rating based on the National Inventory of Dams criteria as seen below in Table 4.3 (EPA, 2015):

Table 4.3: EPA Hazard Potential Rating		
Category	Description	
High Hazard Potential	Dams assigned the high hazard potential classification are those where failure or mis-operation will probably cause loss of human life.	
Significant Hazard Potential	Dams assigned the significant hazard potential classification are those dams where failure or mis-operation results in no probable loss of human life, but can cause economic loss, environment damage, disruption of lifeline facilities, or impact other concerns. Significant hazard potential classification dams are often located in predominantly rural or agricultural areas, but could be located in areas with population and significant infrastructure.	
Low Hazard Potential	Dams assigned the low hazard potential classification are those where failure or mis-operation results in no probable loss of human life and low economic and/or environmental losses. Losses are principally limited to the owner's property	
Less than Low Hazard Potential	Dams which do not pose high, significant, or low hazard potential. Failure or misoperation of the dams result in no probable loss of human life or economic or environmental losses.	

Mis-operation or failure of the embankment at the plant would release a small volume of water and likely result in small erosion. The failure would not likely cause loss of human life but could cause low economic and/or environmental losses within the plant boundary. Thus, **according to the hazard potential classification used by EPA, the impoundment system would be classified as "Low Hazard Potential".**

4.4 <u>Amount and Type of Residuals Currently Contained in the Unit(s) and</u> <u>Maximum Capacity</u>

The amount of residuals in the impoundment ponds was unknown at the time of UES' exploration. The surface impoundment system studied in this analysis has an approximate surface area of 5.2 acres, and receives a number of plant process waters including cooling tower blow down, plant drain discharges and sluiced ash water. The ash ponds also receive small quantities of fly ash during maintenance outage periods.

DGS CCR Surface Impoundment System Hazard Potential Classification UES Project No. 0230.1500077 Date: October 12, 2016

4.5 <u>Principal Project Structures</u>

GRU's DGS surface impoundment system consists of the following components:

- Two 15-inch steel pipes at the northeastern corner of Ash Cell #1, and the southwestern corner of Ash Cell #2.
- Embankments made from compacted soil.
- Two concrete riser structures with stop logs, one in each ash pond. The riser within Ash Cell #1 is located near the southern corner, and the riser within Ash Cell #2 is located near the eastern corner.
- Two 12-inch diameter filament-wound, glass-fiber reinforced pipes with inlets located within the stop log structures. The flow into each pipe is controlled by a 12-inch butterfly valve. The inlet and outlet of these pipes are located at an elevation of 177 and 175 feet NGVD 29, respectively.
- A pump house located at the eastern corner of Pump Back Cell #1.

Plans for these structures can be found in the B&M 1981 drawings, located in Appendix B.

4.6 <u>Critical Infrastructure within five miles down gradient</u>

Based on topographic and potentiometric information (Appendix C-1/Appendix C-2), the site is relatively flat and does not appear to have a clearly-defined drainage direction. Critical infrastructure within 5 miles of the impoundment ponds includes schools, churches, hospitals, waterways, roads and bridges. Some of the critical infrastructure identified includes:

- U.S. Highway 441
- Hague Baptist Church
- Country Crossroads Baptist Church
- William S. Talbot Elementary School
- Dove World Outreach Center
- Trinity United Methodist Church
- Pleasant Hill Baptist Church

The closest of the aforementioned infrastructure, U.S. Highway 441, is approximately ³/₄ miles from the DGS surface impoundment system.

A breach in the impoundment pond embankments is likely to be confined to the DGS property, and is unlikely to result in the loss of human life.

5.0 LIMITATIONS

This report has been prepared for the exclusive use of Innovative Waste Consulting Services, LLC, and Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU). The scope is limited to the specific project and locations described herein. Our description of the project's design parameters represents our understanding of the significant aspects relevant to its hazard potential classification. In the event that any changes in the design of the CCR surface impoundment system as outlined in this report are planned, we should be informed so the changes can be reviewed and the conclusions of this report modified, if required, and approved in writing by UES.

DGS CCR Surface Impoundment System Hazard Potential Classification UES Project No. 0230.1500077 Date: October 12, 2016

For a further description of the scope and limitations of this report please review the document attached within **Appendix D**, "Important Information About Your Geotechnical Engineering Report" prepared by the Geoprofessional Business Association (GBA).

6.0 **REFERENCES**

CDM Smith. (2014). Assessment of Dam Safety of Coal Combustion Surface Impoundments Final Report. FL.

U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. (1979). Table 1: Size Classification. *Recommended Guidelines for Safety Inspection of Dams*. Washington, D.C.: USACE

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). "40 CFR Parts 257 and 261: Hazard Potential Ratings." *Federal Register 80.*74, (2015): 21318. Print.



APPENDIX A

OVERALL SITE PLAN

TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY OF PONDS



	GRU Deerhaven Generating Station Gainesville, Alachua County, Florida		
	Site Location Map		
UNIVERSAL	DATE: 07-22-16	UES PROJECT NO.: 0230.1500077	APPENDIX NO.: A
ENGINEERING SCIENCES	SCALE: N.T.S.	REPORT NO.: 1352241	FIGURE NO.:A 1

MAP SHOWING TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY OF A Part of Sections 26 and 27, Township 8 South, Range 19 East

Alachua County, Florida

VICINITY MAP

(NOT TO SCALE)



SURVEYOR'S NOTES

1) THIS IS A TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY, CERTIFIED TO INNOVATIVE WASTE CONSULTING SERVICES, LLC,. IT WAS PERFORMED IN COMPLIANCE WITH PROJECT-SPECIFIC SCOPES OF WORK AND IS LIMITED TO THE INFORMATIOM SHOWN HEREON.

2) ELEVATIONS SHOWN HEREON ARE REFERENCED TO THE NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929 (NGVD29) AND ARE BASED ON RTK/GPS CORRECTIONS FROM THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S FLORIDA PERMANENT REFERENCE NETWORK. GPS OBSERVATIONS AND RTK CORRECTIONS WERE VERIFIED TO NATIONAL GEODETIC BENCHMARK N 733 (PID#DL6491). NGVD 29 ELEVATION VALUES WERE OBTAINED USING THE VERTCON VERTICAL ADJUSTMENT UTILITY (CORPSCON VERSION 6.0.1). THE DATUM SHIFT CONVERSION APPLIED TO CONVERT NAVD 88 OBTAINED ELEVATIONS TO NGVD 29 WAS +0.78'.

3) SURVEY DATA WAS OBTAINED USING A COMBINATION METHODOLOGY OF RTK/GPS OBSERVATIONS, CONVENTIONAL GROUND SURVEYING PRACTICES AND DIFFERENTIAL LEVELING.

4) THIS SURVEY IN ITS DIGITAL FORMAT IS INTENDED TO BE DISPLAYED AT A SCALE OF 1"=20' OR SMALLER.

LEGEND & ABBREVIATIONS

- DENOTES PROJECT BENCHMARK
- ×131.3 DENOTES ELEVATION AT "X"
- ____(133.59) DENOTES ELEVATION AT END OF LEADER
 - DENOTES WOOD LIGHT POLE ¢
 - DENOTES WOOD LIGHT POLE WITH ELECTRIC HAND HOLE Ø
 - O DENOTES METAL SIGN
 - DENOTES MONITORING WELL

DENOTES ASPHALT

DENOTES CONCRETE · . y. ~

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DENOTES METAL GRATING

GRAPHIC SCALE



SURVEY DATE: APRIL 13, 2015	DRAWING DATE: SEPTEMBER 8, 2015	
FIELD BOOK_ <u>G-157</u> , page(s) <u>13-21</u>	DRAWING SCALE: 1" = 20'	605 NORTHWEST 53RD AVENUE - SUITE A11A
DRAFTED BY: TPT	REVISION DATE:	GAINESVILLE, FL 32609
CHECKED BY: GRN		FAX 352-338-9677
COMPUTER FILE: 2015328_Deerhaven Topo.DWG		LICENSED BUSINESS NUMBER L.B.4603
JOB FILE No. 2015328		





APPENDIX B

B & M (1981) DRAWINGS

CITY OF GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA GAINESVILLE - ALACHUA COUNTY **REGIONAL UTILITIES BOARD DEERHAVEN GENERATING STATION - UNIT 2**

CONTRACT 29C - YARD STRUCTURES III

1980

YARD			
YO	GENERAL	SITE	PLAN

Y62

Y63

Y64

Y65 Y66

Y67

Y68

Y69

Y70

Y71

Y72

Y73

Y74

Y75 Y76

Y77

Y78

Y79

Y80

Y81

Y82

Y83

Y84

Y85

Y86

Y87

Y88

Y89

Y90

Y91 Y92 Y93

Y94

Y.95

SITE PLAN
CLEARING & GRUBBING LIMITS
GRADING PLAN 1
GRADING PLAN 2
GRADING PLAN 3
GRADING PLAN 4
GRADING PLAN 5
GRADING PLAN 6
GRADING PLAN 7
GRADING PLAN 8
GRADING PLAN 9
GRADING PLAN 10
GRADING PLAN 11
DELETED FROM CONTRACT - NOT APPLICABLE
ROAD PROFILES 1
ROAD PROFILES 2
RAMP PROFILES
UNASSIGNED .
GRADING SECTIONS 1
GRADING SECTIONS 2
GRADING SECTIONS 3
GRADING SECTIONS 4
UNASSIGNED
GRADING DETAILS 1
GRADING DETAILS 2
GRADING DETAILS 3
GRADING DETAILS 4
GRADING DETAILS 5
UNASSIGNED
STORM DRAINAGE DETAILS 1
STORM DRAINAGE DETAILS 2

STORM DRAINAGE DETAILS 3

UNASSIGNED

UNASSIGNED

ARCHITECTURAL

A86 ASH POND ELECTRICAL BUILDING PLAN AND DETAILS ASH POND ELECTRICAL BUILDING DETAILS **487**

STRUCTURAL

S1	STANDARD DETAILS
\$2	STANDARD DETAILS
S3	STANDARD DETAILS
S4	STANDARD DETAILS
S5	STANDARD DETAILS
S222	RECYCLE PUMP STRUCTURE
S223	ASH POND ELEC EQUIP. BLDG RETAINING WALL
S224	ASH POND STOPLOG STRUCTURE NO. 1 & 2
S225	SLUDGE POND STOPLOG STRUCTURE NO. 1 & 2
S226	HEADWALLS & BRIDGE ABUTMENTS
S227	STOPLOG STRUCTURE BRIDGES
S228	CROSSING STRUCTURE NO. 6
S229	CROSSING STRUCTURE NO. 7
·S230	CROSSING STRUCTURE NO. 8 & SLURRY WALL CROSSINGS NO. 1 & 2
S231	ASH PIPE DRAIN PIT STRUCTURE & ASH POND ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT BUILDING
S232	PIPE SUPPORTS
S233	UNASSIGNED
S234	CONC SLAB ON STOCKOUT TOWER & STAIR TOWER GUARD POSTS
S235	C.P.R. POND PUMP STRUCTURE & HEADWALL TEMP CONSTR RUNOFF POND NO. 1 OUTLET
S236	SECURE LANDFILL RUNOFF RETENTION POND PUMP STRUCTURE & INTAKE STRUCTURE
S237	ASH LANDFILL PUMP STRUCTURE
S238	UNASSIGNED
S239	UNASSIGNED
S240	UNASSIGNED

Burns & M Donnell Engineers - Architects - Consultants Kansas City, Missouri

76-077-1

118

MECHANICAL HVAC & PLUMBING ASH POND ELECTRICAL M35 EQUIPMENT BUILDING MECHANICAL - YARD PIPING 117 DRAWING REFERENCE & LEGEND DELETED FROM CONTRACT - NOT APPLICABLE YARD UTILITIES - ASH & SLUDGE PONDS (3:1) YARD UTILITIES - SECURE LANDFILL U10 ASH LANDFILL บาา U12 ASH LANDFILL II U13 UNASSIGNED UP43 ISOMETRIC DETAILS I UP44 ISOMETRIC DETAILS II UP45 UNASSIGNED MISCELLANEOUS PIPING DETAILS I UP46 UP47 MISCELLANEOUS PIPING DETAILS II MISCELLANEOUS PIPING DETAILS III UP48 UNASSIGNED UP49. YARD ENLARGEMENT DETAILS I UP50 YARD ENLARGEMENT DETAILS II UP51 YARD ENLARGEMENT DETAILS III UP52 YARD ENLARGEMENT DETAILS IV UP53 VALVE LIST AND CONNECTIONS SCHEDULE UP54

CONFORMING TO CONSTRUCTION RECORDS

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13. -14 15 16 17 18 19 NO. DATE BY REVISION (I-3) (I-15) (L-16) ADDED NOTES FOR CLARIFICATION (L-14) DELETED NOTE (M-3) ADDED DETAIL DJP - C. PLANT ROAD "H" DETAIL 21-80 DMZ ISSUED-WITH ADDENDUM NO.3 SOUED AS BID -EDGE OF SHOULDER DM. EDGE OF SHOULDER -1-81 010 CONFORMING TO 14"/FT 1/4"/FT CONSTRUCTION RECORD BEGIN TRANSITION NORMAL CROWN - & PLANT ROAD "H" -EDGE OF SHOULDER EDGE OF SHOULDER-2.08% TRANSITION MIDPOINT NOT TO SCALE - & PLANT ROAD "H" -EDGE OF. SHOULDER EDGE OF SHOULDER-2.08% NOTE: REVERSE PROCESS INTO NORMAL CROWN END TRANSITION $\mathbb{Z}_{\mathcal{K}^{(n)}}$ NOT TO SCALE -ELEV. SHOWN ON PLANS -WIDTH SHOWN ON PLANS Δ TOP OF SUBGRADE - 12" THICK RIP RAP TYPICAL SECTION RIP RAPPED FLAT BOTTOM DITCH CONTRACT NO. 29C YARD STRUCTURES III 6" - - UPPER LIMIT OF RIPRAP & FILTER BLANKET MATERIAL CUT-OFF ELEVATIONS, AS SHOWN ON GRADING PLANS AND SECTIONS. DEERHAVEN GENERATING STATION UNIT 2 CITY OF GAINESVILLE/ 1200 CER GAINESVILLE-ALACHUA COUNTY - RIPRAP (SEE SPECIFICATIONS FOR SIZES) REGIONAL UTILITIES BOARD FLORIDA Δ -TOE OF SLOPE AS INDICATED ON PLANS GRADING DETAILS 2 Δ - EXISTING GRADE Burns & McDonnell XA. FILTER-BLANKET MATERIAL Engin ASH CELL NO.I & NO.2 SLUDGE CELL NO.I & NO.2 PUMP BACK CELL NO.I & NO.2 COAL PILE RUNOFF RETENTION POND TYPICAL RIPRAP PLACEMENT DETAIL NOT TO SCALE KANSAS CITY, MISSOUR DATE FEB. 18, 1980 RE GNED MEYERS Y86 - 1 TAILED BAKER PROJECT 76-077-1 ECKED DYNZ SHEET OF SHEET

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APPENDIX C

TOPOGRAPHIC MAP

POTENTIOMETRIC MAP

By Sandra L. Kinnaman and Joann F. Dixon

APPENDIX D

GBA DOCUMENT

Important Information about This Geotechnical-Engineering Report

Subsurface problems are a principal cause of construction delays, cost overruns, claims, and disputes.

While you cannot eliminate all such risks, you can manage them. The following information is provided to help.

The Geoprofessional Business Association (GBA) has prepared this advisory to help you - assumedly a client representative - interpret and apply this geotechnical-engineering report as effectively as possible. In that way, clients can benefit from a lowered exposure to the subsurface problems that, for decades, have been a principal cause of construction delays, cost overruns, claims, and disputes. If you have questions or want more information about any of the issues discussed below, contact your GBA-member geotechnical engineer. Active involvement in the Geoprofessional Business Association exposes geotechnical engineers to a wide array of risk-confrontation techniques that can be of genuine benefit for everyone involved with a construction project.

Geotechnical-Engineering Services Are Performed for Specific Purposes, Persons, and Projects

Geotechnical engineers structure their services to meet the specific needs of their clients. A geotechnical-engineering study conducted for a given civil engineer will not likely meet the needs of a civil-works constructor or even a different civil engineer. Because each geotechnical-engineering study is unique, each geotechnical-engineering report is unique, prepared *solely* for the client. *Those who rely on a geotechnical-engineering report prepared for a different client can be seriously misled.* No one except authorized client representatives should rely on this geotechnical-engineering report without first conferring with the geotechnical engineer who prepared it. *And no one – not even you – should apply this report for any purpose or project except the one originally contemplated.*

Read this Report in Full

Costly problems have occurred because those relying on a geotechnicalengineering report did not read it *in its entirety*. Do not rely on an executive summary. Do not read selected elements only. *Read this report in full*.

You Need to Inform Your Geotechnical Engineer about Change

Your geotechnical engineer considered unique, project-specific factors when designing the study behind this report and developing the confirmation-dependent recommendations the report conveys. A few typical factors include:

- the client's goals, objectives, budget, schedule, and risk-management preferences;
- the general nature of the structure involved, its size, configuration, and performance criteria;
- the structure's location and orientation on the site; and
- other planned or existing site improvements, such as retaining walls, access roads, parking lots, and underground utilities.

Typical changes that could erode the reliability of this report include those that affect:

- the site's size or shape;
- the function of the proposed structure, as when it's changed from a parking garage to an office building, or from a light-industrial plant to a refrigerated warehouse;
- the elevation, configuration, location, orientation, or weight of the proposed structure;
- the composition of the design team; or
- project ownership.

As a general rule, *always* inform your geotechnical engineer of project changes – even minor ones – and request an assessment of their impact. *The geotechnical engineer who prepared this report cannot accept responsibility or liability for problems that arise because the geotechnical engineer was not informed about developments the engineer otherwise would have considered.*

This Report May Not Be Reliable

Do not rely on this report if your geotechnical engineer prepared it:

- for a different client;
- for a different project;
- for a different site (that may or may not include all or a portion of the original site); or
- before important events occurred at the site or adjacent to it; e.g., man-made events like construction or environmental remediation, or natural events like floods, droughts, earthquakes, or groundwater fluctuations.

Note, too, that it could be unwise to rely on a geotechnical-engineering report whose reliability may have been affected by the passage of time, because of factors like changed subsurface conditions; new or modified codes, standards, or regulations; or new techniques or tools. *If your geotechnical engineer has not indicated an "apply-by" date on the report, ask what it should be*, and, in general, *if you are the least bit uncertain* about the continued reliability of this report, contact your geotechnical engineer before applying it. A minor amount of additional testing or analysis – if any is required at all – could prevent major problems.

Most of the "Findings" Related in This Report Are Professional Opinions

Before construction begins, geotechnical engineers explore a site's subsurface through various sampling and testing procedures. *Geotechnical engineers can observe actual subsurface conditions only at those specific locations where sampling and testing were performed.* The data derived from that sampling and testing were reviewed by your geotechnical engineer, who then applied professional judgment to form opinions about subsurface conditions throughout the site. Actual sitewide-subsurface conditions may differ – maybe significantly – from those indicated in this report. Confront that risk by retaining your geotechnical engineer to serve on the design team from project start to project finish, so the individual can provide informed guidance quickly, whenever needed.

This Report's Recommendations Are Confirmation-Dependent

The recommendations included in this report – including any options or alternatives – are confirmation-dependent. In other words, *they are not final*, because the geotechnical engineer who developed them relied heavily on judgment and opinion to do so. Your geotechnical engineer can finalize the recommendations *only after observing actual subsurface conditions* revealed during construction. If through observation your geotechnical engineer confirms that the conditions assumed to exist actually do exist, the recommendations can be relied upon, assuming no other changes have occurred. *The geotechnical engineer who prepared this report cannot assume responsibility or liability for confirmationdependent recommendations if you fail to retain that engineer to perform construction observation*.

This Report Could Be Misinterpreted

Other design professionals' misinterpretation of geotechnicalengineering reports has resulted in costly problems. Confront that risk by having your geotechnical engineer serve as a full-time member of the design team, to:

- confer with other design-team members,
- help develop specifications,
- review pertinent elements of other design professionals' plans and specifications, and
- be on hand quickly whenever geotechnical-engineering guidance is needed.

You should also confront the risk of constructors misinterpreting this report. Do so by retaining your geotechnical engineer to participate in prebid and preconstruction conferences and to perform construction observation.

Give Constructors a Complete Report and Guidance

Some owners and design professionals mistakenly believe they can shift unanticipated-subsurface-conditions liability to constructors by limiting the information they provide for bid preparation. To help prevent the costly, contentious problems this practice has caused, include the complete geotechnical-engineering report, along with any attachments or appendices, with your contract documents, *but be certain to note conspicuously that you've included the material for informational purposes only.* To avoid misunderstanding, you may also want to note that "informational purposes" means constructors have no right to rely on the interpretations, opinions, conclusions, or recommendations in the report, but they may rely on the factual data relative to the specific times, locations, and depths/elevations referenced. Be certain that constructors know they may learn about specific project requirements, including options selected from the report, *only* from the design drawings and specifications. Remind constructors that they may perform their own studies if they want to, and *be sure to allow enough time* to permit them to do so. Only then might you be in a position to give constructors the information available to you, while requiring them to at least share some of the financial responsibilities stemming from unanticipated conditions. Conducting prebid and preconstruction conferences can also be valuable in this respect.

Read Responsibility Provisions Closely

Some client representatives, design professionals, and constructors do not realize that geotechnical engineering is far less exact than other engineering disciplines. That lack of understanding has nurtured unrealistic expectations that have resulted in disappointments, delays, cost overruns, claims, and disputes. To confront that risk, geotechnical engineers commonly include explanatory provisions in their reports. Sometimes labeled "limitations," many of these provisions indicate where geotechnical engineers' responsibilities begin and end, to help others recognize their own responsibilities and risks. *Read these provisions closely*. Ask questions. Your geotechnical engineer should respond fully and frankly.

Geoenvironmental Concerns Are Not Covered

The personnel, equipment, and techniques used to perform an environmental study – e.g., a "phase-one" or "phase-two" environmental site assessment – differ significantly from those used to perform a geotechnical-engineering study. For that reason, a geotechnicalengineering report does not usually relate any environmental findings, conclusions, or recommendations; e.g., about the likelihood of encountering underground storage tanks or regulated contaminants. *Unanticipated subsurface environmental problems have led to project failures*. If you have not yet obtained your own environmental information, ask your geotechnical consultant for risk-management guidance. As a general rule, *do not rely on an environmental report prepared for a different client, site, or project, or that is more than six months old.*

Obtain Professional Assistance to Deal with Moisture Infiltration and Mold

While your geotechnical engineer may have addressed groundwater, water infiltration, or similar issues in this report, none of the engineer's services were designed, conducted, or intended to prevent uncontrolled migration of moisture – including water vapor – from the soil through building slabs and walls and into the building interior, where it can cause mold growth and material-performance deficiencies. Accordingly, *proper implementation of the geotechnical engineer's recommendations will not of itself be sufficient to prevent moisture infiltration*. Confront the risk of moisture infiltration by including building-envelope or mold specialists on the design team. *Geotechnical engineers are not buildingenvelope or mold specialists*.

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