

Act on Soil and GW Pollution in Thailand

1. Enhancement and Conservation of National Environmental Quality Act B.E. 2535 (NEQA, 1992) is the main legal framework of environmental management in Thailand. This act was a replacement on obsolete NEQA B.E. 2505 (1962), NEQA (2nd edition) B.E. 2521(1978) and NEQA (3rd edition) B.E. 2522 (1979). This act is used mainly by 3 main environmental related departments in Thailand, Pollution Control Department (PCD), Department of Environmental Quality Promotion (DEQP) and Office of Natural Resource and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP). It was effective after official announcement in the government gazette on 4 April 1992. Currently there are 115 articles in NEQA which can be group into 9 parts.

Under NEQA, 1992 Groundwater quality standard in Thailand was set in the year 2000 after a suspicion of groundwater contamination in northern industrial estate at Lampoon province from electronic industries. At the time, because of limited knowledge on volatile organic compound, its health effect, and lack of information about contaminant's background level, groundwater quality standard in Thailand was set after US.EPA's standard for groundwater suitable for drinking. Later, the soil quality standard was set in 2004. This soil standard was divided for 2 areas. First, the soil standard for residence and agricultural uses and second is the soil standard for other uses.

Seeing example from many countries, the pollution control department is in the process of developing and propose a new regulation on soil groundwater and sediment contamination which might turn out to be a new separate act from NEQA.

2. Factory Act B.E. 2535 (FA, 1992), used by Department of Industrial Works, is also allows the minister of industry to issue regulations that required factories to monitor their groundwater and soil contamination within the factories area. However, the regulation related to soil and groundwater contamination under this act is still under development.