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# Technical Support Center for Monitoring and Site Characterization

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## Introduction

The U.S. EPA maintains Technical Support Centers in several laboratories operated by the Office of Research and Development (ORD). These Technical Support Centers are dedicated to serving the EPA Regions by supplying high-quality, quick-response technical services when the scope of work is beyond the technical capabilities of local contractors.

The Environmental Sciences Division (ESD) in Las Vegas has an active Technical Support Center (TSC) for Monitoring and Site Characterization that responds to requests from the Regions. The TSC began in 1987 and, originally, specialized in Superfund support to Remedial Project Managers (RPMs) and On-Scene Coordinators (OSCs). In 1999, the TSC began to participate in Brownfields technical support.

The TSC specializes in sampling and monitoring technologies, quality assurance, soil ground water sampling and special analytical services. This diversity of expertise allows the TSC to work with Regional personnel throughout a site characterization event, from planning and design to analysis and data interpretation.

In addition to direct technical support, the ESD TSC provides technical communication to the Regions through the Technology Transfer Project. Fact sheets and various presentations, demonstrations, and poster sessions help to keep Regional personnel up to date with the services available through the TSC.

## Regional Requests

When RPMs/OSC or RCRA Project Officers require assistance through the ESD TSC, they contact the manager of the TSC by phone or email. Before any work is performed, a written request must be made. The TSC manager determines the ability to meet the demands of the request and contacts the technical staff appropriate for the project.

After the work is done, a report is issued to the requestor. Often these reports go beyond the specific needs of a particular site. Technical information gained at Superfund, RCRA and Brownfields sites form the basis for a growing background literature about the specialized challenges of complex environmental matrices and also serve to validate research-developed procedures, methods, and ideas.

## Technical Focus

The TSC provides support to the Regions in site characterization technologies such as field-portable X-ray fluorescence (FPXRF), soil-gas measurement, geophysics, special analytical services, quality assurance, chemical analysis, geostatistics, statistical design, GIS, and data interpretation.

When on-site work is required, the TSC mobilizes specialized teams equipped with portable or deployable instruments to assist the Regions with the screening and site-characterization work that forms the basis for all subsequent work.

## Document/Data Reviews

In addition to the deployment of field scientists, the TSC helps the Regions evaluate documents and environmental data that have been submitted by local contractors. This support is crucial to wise decision-making by the Regions. Team efforts between the TSC and the Region result in better technology, quicker response, and greater legal defensibility.

## Publications

The TSC manager is a member of various technical forums. This participation often leads to the authorship or coordination of issue papers relating to the use of innovative technologies for monitoring and site characterization.

Technical support projects are documented in reports to the Regions which vary in length and complexity according to the project needs. Projects can identify areas for further research or develop protocols for experimental or sampling design.

The TSC participates in interagency workshops with the U.S. DOE and U.S. DOD and together these organizations have published guidance documents that address the special challenges of heterogeneous wastes at federal and other facilities.

Through the Technology Transfer Project, the TSC “markets” its services to the Regions and beyond. Fact sheets describe dozens of analytical and field technologies that are available through the TSC.

# Technical Support Center

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## For Further Information

*If you have questions about the services available through the Technical Support Center at ESD or wish to be added to the TSC mailing list, contact:*

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