

professional,” in general, the standard of practice indicates that this person should have a combination of education and experience that is appropriate for the type of work to be performed. A site design professional, however, has adequate knowledge of land and real estate to conduct a transaction screen analysis. The professional can purchase a preprinted checklist from the ASTM that provides the entire standard guideline E-1528. Using the checklist, the site professional is able to walk through a cursory site-assessment process as part of the site analysis. Information collected in the screening process could contribute to the site analysis by identifying additional concerns that might impact the proposed use. The outcome of the site assessment may be to recommend that the client conduct a Phase I ESA.

The transaction screen may be used to provide guidance as to whether a Phase I is called for, but very often lenders require the Phase I as a minimum acceptable level of investigation. The screening process is a straightforward evaluation of the property and is usually most appropriate for properties where no development has occurred. However, in spite of these limitations, the site professional should consider adding the screening to the typical site analysis process. Some lenders have an in-house screening process, but the *ASTM Transaction Screening Guide*, Table 2.5, is the most commonly used format (*ASTM Standard Guide 1528*).

The Phase I site assessment

Several factors contribute to deciding whether to perform a Phase I ESA. First, if the buyer is a professional developer or a person familiar with real estate, there is some likelihood that he or she would be held to a higher standard of inquiry than an individual home buyer. This is probably true of site design

TABLE 2.5 ASTM Transaction Screening Guide, Level of Inquiry for an Environmental Screening

Has the site been filled in the past?
Is there any knowledge that the fill could contain hazardous materials or petroleum waste products?
Is the property in an area currently or historically used for industrial or commercial activities?
Is the property zoned for industrial or commercial uses?
Are adjacent properties used for industrial or commercial activities?
If there are existing or previous commercial or industrial uses, was there any indication that hazardous materials may have been used, generated, stored, or disposed of?
Does the site drain into a municipal collection system?
Do adjacent properties drain on to the site?
Are there reasons to suspect the quality of runoff from adjacent parcels?
Are there transformers on the property?
Is an on-site well required for water supply?
