EPA-FUNDED BROWNFIELDS QAPP AND SAMPLING PLAN FOR MUNICIPAL REDEVELOPMENT

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Houston, Texas

PROJECT OVERVIEW

ESE prepared a Quality Assurance Project Plan for an EPA-funded Brownfields effort supporting a municipal brownfields program, providing the quality framework and sampling plan needed to conduct limited subsurface investigations and produce defensible, regulator-ready data. The QAPP established roles, oversight responsibilities, and distribution requirements to ensure the project team, laboratory, and stakeholders operated under a consistent quality system from fieldwork through reporting.

CHALLENGES

Brownfields projects often involve time-sensitive redevelopment priorities where decisions depend on data quality, not just data collection. To support efficient assessment and protect funding eligibility, the program required a compliant QAPP that clearly defined data usability requirements, field methods, laboratory standards, and corrective action procedures if data deficiencies were identified.

ESE'S APPROACH

ESE developed the QAPP in alignment with EPA QA/R-5 requirements and integrated a Sampling and Analysis Plan that defined project data quality objectives, sampling rationale, analytical methods, documentation standards, and quality control procedures. The plan established oversight protocols across field and laboratory activities, including review of analytical results, chain-of-custody defensibility, and report review prior to submittal, with defined response actions if discrepancies were identified.

KEY ELEMENTS

- Defined Data Quality Objectives and indicators to support decision-making and data usability
- Established sampling rationale and field methods for soil, soil gas, and water investigation activities
- Documented sample handling requirements including labeling, chain-of-custody, packaging, and shipment
- Included quality control procedures such as blanks, duplicates, and laboratory QC to verify data integrity
- Defined review, verification, and validation expectations and corrective action pathways when anomalies occur

RESULTS

ESE delivered a complete, implementation-ready QAPP and sampling plan that established clear expectations for field execution, laboratory performance, and data review, enabling the municipal brownfields program to proceed with confidence that resulting data would be usable for redevelopment decisions and stakeholder review.

PROJECT IMPACT

EPA-funded Brownfields assessments succeed when quality is built in from the start, reducing the risk of re-sampling, schedule delays, and uncertainty during redevelopment planning. By providing a compliant QAPP with clear oversight, documentation, and data usability requirements, ESE helped the municipal program advance assessment activities efficiently while maintaining defensible records and reliable results for next-step decision-making.