

Rubric for Site Assessment Final Project ARE 309

The purpose of this project is to introduce students to the process by which environmental hazards on real property are assessed. This project simulates a preliminary (Phase I) environmental site assessment. This assessment is noninvasive and is based upon records, interviews with knowledgeable individuals, and observation of the property.

1. Read the handout on environmental liability on electronic reserve.
2. Select a commercial or farm property upon which you can conduct an environmental site assessment. Residential properties are generally not acceptable. The property should be one that will make for an interesting project. If you are not sure you may discuss this with the instructor. Properties owned by governments are not recommended but may be used.

Timely selection of property – 10 points.

3. Trace the chain of title. Attach a copy of the following:
 - record from the tax assessor's office (including the tax map, if available);
 - a copy of one or more deeds (or other means of transfer such as a probated will);
 - and a copy of the survey (if available).

This information is now available online in most counties. It is acceptable (and encouraged) to include the entire record. Photographs are available in some counties.

It is not acceptable to provide only a tax bill (although that may be included). Records should be obtained from official sources, not from family members, or friends. Certified copies of records are neither required nor encouraged as this may make the project expensive. However, if it appears that official sources were not used points may be deducted.

4. Prepare a 3-5 page (typed, double-spaced, 10-12 point type) report that includes the following:
 - 1) A description of the property.
 - 2) A historical review of the property, including a discussion of the chain of title.
 - 3) A summary of the visual inspection of the property.

4) A summary of an interview conducted with either the owner(s), a lessee, or a neighbor of the property who is knowledgeable about the property.

5) Discussion of possible environmental problems with the property and recommendations for further action. You may conclude that there are no problems if that conclusion is warranted.

5. Attach copies of the information requested in # 3. Examples of these documents are available through electronic reserve. Also attach a copy of your interview questions from #4.

Factors considered in grading the paper:

- Were the instructions in this rubric followed?
- Did the student use standard business grammar and proper spelling?
- Were materials used in addition to the interview properly cited and used? Was a consistent citation style used throughout? Were quotations appropriate to the paper? Were quotations of excessive length?
- Were adequate supporting documents provided?
- Was the student adequately prepared for the interview as evidenced by the questions asked? What sources did the student use to prepare for the interview?
- Did the student reach a reasonable conclusion based upon the information presented?

Last updated January 4, 2010