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| **Environmental Enlightenment #175** By Ami Adini - Reissued September 10, 2014   |  | | --- | | This is a SHORT, LIGHT and SIMPLE newsletter. Its purpose is to rekindle in the initiated terminology they have once learned, and enlighten the uninitiated on terms they may have heard but never known the meaning of. | | **Environmental Base Line**  In dealing with physical matters, absolutes do not exist. One establishes value only by comparison.  Suppose I said, “Three hundred.” Your immediate response could probably be, “Three hundred what? Fish? Avocado? Light years?” Suppose I said, “Three hundred dollars.” Now we have value that can be compared. We can buy so many almonds, rent a car for so many days, finance a date with a loved one, or do many other nice things. And when we look at the opportunities that three hundred dollars afford us, we shall undoubtedly arrive fast at the conclusion that five hundred is more.  http://amiadini.com/NewsletterArchive/140910-NL175/envEnl-175_files/envEnl-175_clip_image002.jpg  A “bench mark” is term used in the field of land surveying.  http://amiadini.com/NewsletterArchive/140910-NL175/envEnl-175_files/envEnl-175_clip_image004.jpg  In establishing elevations of land features, the surveyor indicates feet above mean sea level. As it is impractical to run back and forth to the ocean every time we take a measurement, various bench marks are located throughout the land to indicate the altitude at their locations. A typical bench mark is made of a round disk of metal embedded in a small monument of concrete with a punched point on the disk. The surveyor measures the elevations of the land features in that area relative to the known elevation of the point on the bench mark.  A “base line” is any precisely determined line forming a side of a triangle so that when the adjacent angles are measured, the relative position of a third point (the tip of the triangle opposite the base line) is determined.  In the following diagram, lines Q-V, Q-R, and R-V are base lines.  http://amiadini.com/NewsletterArchive/140910-NL175/envEnl-175_files/envEnl-175_clip_image006.jpg  The principle of base line is used in land surveying and in navigation to locate various positions on the surface. The concepts of bench mark and base line are same: establishment of an arbitrary value from which other, relative values are determined.  http://amiadini.com/NewsletterArchive/140910-NL175/envEnl-175_files/envEnl-175_clip_image008.jpg  Certain real estate transactions take place in properties where subsurface contamination already exists or where an operation is planned that may cause contamination. For example, an operator of refueling facility enters a lease agreement on the facility, or an industrial operation takes over a property. In such cases, it would be prudent for all sides involved to establish an environmental base line (or bench mark) on the presence of pollutants in the soil and groundwater at the property.  A base line is established by collecting soil and groundwater samples from certain locations and depths and analyzing same for the chemicals of concern.  http://amiadini.com/NewsletterArchive/140910-NL175/envEnl-175_files/envEnl-175_clip_image010.jpg  At the end of the lease, or in any time in the future, repeat samples can be taken, analyzed and compared. It is important to remember that, to draw sensible conclusions, the repeat sampling should be done in the exact same locations as the base line sampling. There could, of course, be reasons for future sampling in other locations and analytical tests for other chemicals, as in the case where different operations enter the property, but such sampling does not belong in the context of base line sampling. | | You can find past issues of our "Environmental Enlightenment" at [amiadini.com](http://www.amiadini.com/) Wealth of information about environmental site assessments in the real estate transactions and issues concerning assessment and cleanup of contamination in the subsurface soil and groundwater. |  |  | | --- | | Call me if you have any questions. There are **no obligations.**  Ami Adini Environmental Services, Inc. Environmental Consultants & General Engineering Contractors California Lic. #1009513 A B HAZ ASB **818-824-8102**; [**mail@amiadini.com**](mailto:mail@amiadini.com) [www.amiadini.com](http://amiadini.com/)  Ami Adini is a veteran environmental practitioner with over 40 years of experience. He carries a Bachelor of Science degree (B.Sc.) in Mechanical Engineering including academic credits in Nuclear and Chemical Engineering and postgraduate education in these fields. His career includes design and construction of nuclear plant facilities, chemical processing plants and hazardous wastewater treatment systems. He is a former California Registered Environmental Assessor Levels I & II in the 1988-2012 registry that certified environmental professionals in the assessment and remediation of environmentally impacted land, and a Registered Environmental Professional (REP) since 1989 with the National Registry of Environmental Professionals (NREP). He is a California Business & Professions Code Qualifying Responsible Managing Officer (RMO) in the General Engineering Contractor classification with Hazardous Substance Removal and Asbestos certifications, and president of AMI ADINI ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, INC. (AAES), a general engineering contractor and consulting firm specializing in environmental site assessments, rehabilitation of contaminated sites and removal of environmental risks from real-estate transactions. (Contact Ami for a complete resume.) **AAES provides practical solutions to environmental concerns using the highest standards of ethics and integrity while providing its clients with maximum return on their investments.** | |