

APPENDIX C

WELL OPENING PROCEDURES

Volatile organic contaminants (VOCs) tend to accumulate in the vapor space of well casings. These organics can escape the well stem as a "slug" once the cap is removed from the wellhead. Field personnel will follow these procedures for initial opening of all wells in which the water is expected to contain VOCs in greater than trivial concentrations.

- A two-party team will initiate well-opening **PRIOR** to any sampling activity.
- Approach the wells from an upwind direction.
- For initial well-opening, wear a minimum of Level C respiratory protection, e.g., an Ultratwin with a GMC-H cartridge.
- Open wells with unvented casings and threaded caps slowly to avoid sudden release of gases due to over-pressure.
- When the well is open, test the air in the wellhead for the contaminants of concern.
- If the readings indicate a potential health hazard from the venting process, allow the well to vent for 15 to 30 minutes and then test again.
- The field team may perform monitoring or sampling in the level of protection specified in Chapter 7 for the concentrations found.
- Take new exposure readings at least four or five times an hour.
- Many wells can be opened and "sniffed" at one time, which allows the maximum ventilation time.

If field personnel can demonstrate that volatile organics are not a concern, the site safety and health officer may allow them to skip the VOA procedure. Experience with a recent round of groundwater sampling at the same location would provide enough information to show whether this route of exposure is a concern.