

Plain Text Version of Monitored Natural Attenuation Graphic

Natural ways trichloroethylene (TCE) contamination is reduced in groundwater.

1. Dilution and Dispersion

The contaminants are spread out (dispersed) and watered down (diluted) in groundwater as the pollutants travel away from the source over time.

2. Chemical reactions

The contaminants on the Boeing Auburn site, trichloroethylene (TCE) and vinyl chloride (VC), break down through chemical reactions in the soil and groundwater.

3. Biodegradation

Living bacteria naturally found in soil and groundwater eat contaminants over time. Bacteria are best at breaking down contamination that is at low concentration.

4. Sorption

As groundwater flows through soil, the contaminants stick to carbon in the soil and are held there, reducing the contaminant concentration in groundwater.

5. Evaporation

TCE is a solvent chemical that becomes a gas easily. It can evaporate from the surface of groundwater and enter little pockets of air in soil and make its way up to the surface and enter the atmosphere.

6. Monitoring well

We use monitoring wells to measure the level of contamination in groundwater. These wells are basically long pipes extending underground with open 'screens' in the groundwater at the depths we want to sample.