

ATCC CLASS 1 MICROBES: AN IMPORTANT NOTICE

ATCC stands for American Type Culture Collection

Between 1997 and 2001, the term “ATCC Class 1” microorganisms was erroneously used by the Petroleum Restoration Program (formerly known as Bureau of Petroleum Storage Systems) in its publications pertaining to the Innovative Technology Program. The ATCC has informed the Program that use of its term as a requirement for microbial-type bioremediation product acceptance is inappropriate, since ATCC does not establish the definition of risk groups or biosafety levels for microorganisms. ATCC further indicates that an erroneous definition of its Class 1 microbes was obtained and cited by the Program in its Innovative Technology publications. The Petroleum Restoration Program appreciates the clarifying information provided by ATCC and would like to share it with those who visit this web page.

Instead of the term ATCC Class 1 microorganisms, a more appropriate term may be “Biosafety Level (BSL) 1” microorganisms, which is established by the Public Health Service, through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). BSL-1 agents are defined as “not known to consistently cause disease in healthy adults”. Further information about risk groups and biosafety levels can be found in the CDC/NIH manual titled Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories (BMBL) 4th edition, at the CDC website <http://www.cdc.gov/biosafety/>.

The Petroleum Restoration Program deleted all references to ATCC in its May 25, 1999 update of the “Application for Innovative Technology Evaluation”, and on March 16, 2000 from its guidance document “BPSS-10, In Situ Chemical Additives”. Since February 26, 2002, the Program has begun to purge all references to ATCC from its acceptance letters for microbial-type bioremediation products.

Users of the Petroleum Restoration Program’s web page for innovative technology are requested to report to the Program any references to ATCC that may have been overlooked during the purge. The contact person is Elena Compton, telephone 850-245-8911, e-mail at Elena.Compton@dep.state.fl.us.

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