

United States  
Environmental  
Protection Agency

Office of Emergency  
and Remedial Response

EPA 540-C-97-003  
February 1999  
[www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)

# User's Guide

# SPIS

Superfund Public Information System  
RODS & CERCLIS Information

# Table of Contents

	<b>Page</b>
Introduction to the SPIS CD.....	2
What's New.....	2
System Requirements.....	2
Installation Instructions.....	2
Quick Start Guide.....	4
Superfund Data Definitions.....	4
RODS.....	4
CERCLIS.....	4
Archive (NFRAP).....	4
Navigation Features.....	5
Infobase.....	5
Toolbar.....	5
Site List Display .....	6
Main Menu.....	8
Screens on the SPIS CD.....	9
SPIS.....	9
RODS.....	10
RODS Site Search.....	10
CERCLIS.....	11
CERCLIS Site Search.....	11
Archive (NFRAP).....	12
Archive (NFRAP) Site Search.....	12
Table of Contents.....	13
Searching for Data.....	13
Preset Searches.....	13
Viewing Results.....	14
Using the SPIS Query Functions.....	14
Simple Keyword Searches.....	14
Advanced Keyword Searches.....	15
Printing and Downloading.....	15
Export.....	16
Help.....	16
Disclaimer.....	17

## **Introduction to the SPIS CD**

Welcome to the Superfund Public Information System (SPIS). This is the source for obtaining Record of Decision (ROD) documents for Superfund sites through fiscal year 1998 as well as CERCLIS and Archive (NFRAP) information. EPA is dedicated to providing the public with accurate, timely information about Superfund sites.

### **What's New**

- The SPIS CD has incorporated a “web-like” appearance into its overall design scheme. The SPIS CD user will now find it easier to navigate from screen to screen through the use of button links located in the sidebar on each of the seven menus.
- “Pop-up” screens are now included in RODS to provide definitions of the RODS data elements.
- Record sizes in the RODS infobase have been restructured to provide faster querying capability and flexibility for the SPIS CD user.
- The CERCLIS and Archive (NFRAP) infobases now display the data in convenient tables.

### **System Requirements**

The user will need:

1. IBM or Compatible PC—with a 386SX or higher microprocessor;
2. 32Mb of RAM;
3. CD-ROM drive, mouse;
4. SVGA 256-color display; and
5. Microsoft Windows version 3.1 or later.

### **Installation Instructions:**

#### **IMPORTANT NOTES:**

**If a previous version (i.e., prior to FY 99/1) of the SPIS CD has been installed before, *delete* the C:\SPIS folder and its contents, and C:\Windows\LNAME.INI before reinstalling the current version of the SPIS CD.**

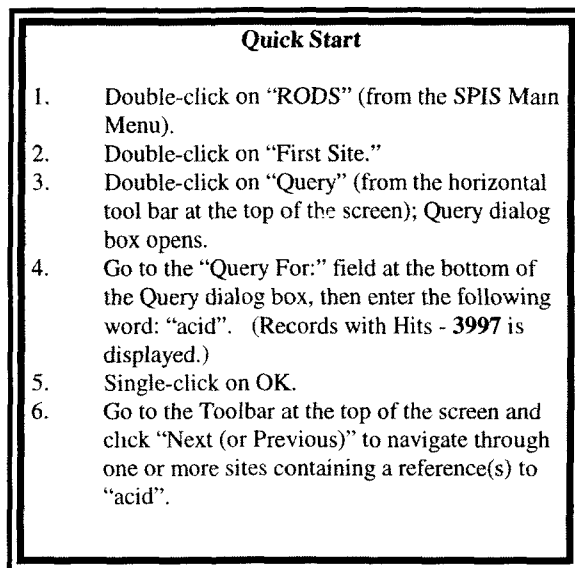
**The user must reset their screen default setting to *High Color (16 bit)* or *True Color (24 bit)***

**before viewing the FY 99/1 SPIS CD application: otherwise, the visual quality and performance of the CD is greatly degraded.** To change the screen default (in Windows 95): click on the START button, then place the cursor on Settings, then Control Panel. Next, double-click on the Display icon, which produces a Display Properties screen. Next, click on the Settings tab at the top of the screen, then click on the down arrow of the *Color Pallete* drop-down menu, then select *High Color (16 bit)* or *True Color (24 bit)*. Click on Apply or OK; a Systems Setting Change dialog box appears; select YES. The PC will automatically reboot. The FY 99/1 SPIS CD is now ready for viewing.

1. Insert the SPIS CD in the CD-ROM drive.
2. **For Windows 95:**
  - a) Select Run from the Start menu.
  - b) Type D:\setup.exe next to Open, where D: is your CD drive.
  - c) Click on OK. A message saying "Initializing Setup" is displayed.
  - d) Click on Continue.
- For Windows 3.1:**
  - a) Double-click on the File Manager (typically in the Main group window) and click on the correct drive letter for the CD drive.
  - b) Scroll down until the setup.exe file appears on the right side of the screen.
  - c) Double-click on setup.exe to initiate the setup routine. A message saying "Initializing Setup" is displayed.
4. Click on Continue.
5. Select Copy To and Run From Local Drive. This tells the setup program that the user wants to copy program files from the CD to the hard drive to make navigation of the data from the CD run faster. (The user can select Access Program Files from CD/Network, but this will slow down navigation).
6. Click on Continue.
7. Select Access Infobases from CD/Network (this is the default). This tells the setup program that the user wants to read the data files from the CD to conserve space on the hard drive. (The user can select Copy To and Run From Local Drive, but they must have at least 420 megabytes free on their hard drive).
8. Click on Continue. This specifies C:\SPIS as the path for any files to be written to the hard drive. (The installation automatically writes a lname.ini file to the C:\Windows directory).
9. Click on Continue. A status bar is displayed that indicates that files are being copied to the hard drive.
10. Wait a few seconds after the status bar has completed. Click on OK when the message is displayed indicating the "Infobases have been installed successfully."
11. Double-click on the SPIS icon to start the program:
  - a) For Windows 95, the icon can be accessed from the Start/Programs/SPIS menu.
  - b) For Windows 3.1, the icon can be accessed from the SPIS group window in Program Manager.

## Quick Start Guide

The example below illustrates a sample of how to locate or search for a specific word in the RODS infobase. Performing this sample search will quickly familiarize the user with how to navigate the SPIS CD system:



## Superfund Data Definitions

### RODS

RODS is the Records Of Decision System. RODS is used to track site clean-up activities under the Superfund program and to justify the type of treatment chosen at each site. RODS contains information on technology justification, site history, community participation, enforcement activities, site characteristics, scope and role of response action, and remedy.

### CERCLIS

CERCLIS is the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System. It is the official repository for all Superfund site and incident data and contains comprehensive information on hazardous waste sites, site inspections, preliminary assessments, and remedial status. The system is sponsored by the EPA's Office of Emergency and Remedial Response, Information Management Center.

### Archive (NFRAP)

The Archive (NFRAP) database consists of sites that have no further remedial action planned. Assessments at these sites have been completed and the EPA has determined that no further steps

will be taken to list these sites on the National Priorities List (NPL). This decision does not necessarily mean that there is no hazard associated with a given site; it means that, based upon available information, the location is not judged to be a potential NPL site.

## Navigation Features

### Infobase

Folio VIEWS software is used to allow selection of different views of the infobase. Because of the large size of the infobases, the SPIS CD contains separate infobases for specific types of information. The Folio VIEWS software allows the user to search across these infobases.

### Record

A record is a unit of information (e.g., a case name, a digest, or a small portion of a document). Most keyword searching finds keywords (known as “hits”) within a record. One document (e.g., the Abstract, Remedy, and Text for a site) is made up of many records. The Folio VIEWS software on the SPIS CD does not allow searching, viewing, or printing by individual documents (e.g., one ROD at a time). Instead, one must search, view, and print from a *range of records*. See Printing and Downloading on page 15 for additional information.

### Toolbar

Throughout the SPIS CD, there is a toolbar that runs horizontally at the top of the screen. The indicated buttons should be used only when a site list has been displayed (e.g., CERCLIS data was selected from the main menu, First Site was selected from browse selections screen, and a site list for CERCLIS data is displayed). Other methods for displaying a site list are discussed in the following section of this brochure. Listed below are the toolbar icons and, if applicable, descriptions of their functions in SPIS.



Not applicable on SPIS



Single-clicking on this button, while a site list resulting from a query is displayed, allows keyword searches.



Single-clicking on this button while a site list resulting from a query is displayed removes the highlight from the “query hit”.



Single-clicking on this button while a site list resulting from a query is displayed moves to the next “query hit” in a site list.



Single-clicking on this button, while a site list resulting from a query is displayed, moves to the previous “query hit” in a site list.



Single-clicking on this button moves from the current screen to the previously selected screen. If there are no previously selected screens (i.e., the Main Menu upon entering SPIS), nothing happens when this button is selected.



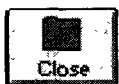
Single-clicking on this button accesses the Contents screen. This feature allows the user to “drill-down” through the table of contents. If the current screen is a site list, the Contents screen will display the list in the selected level (e.g., double-clicking on the number 2 level at the top of the screen will list the *regions* in the site list, double-clicking on the number 3 level at the top of the screen will list the *states* in each region in the site list, etc.). **\*NOTE: Nothing is displayed when Level 1 is selected.**



Single-clicking on this button allows the user to exit out of the SPIS CD application.



Single-clicking on this button allows the user to save selected text as various file types.

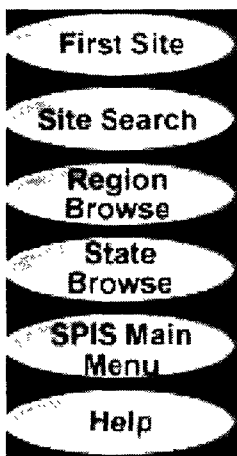


Single-clicking on this button closes an open file and returns the user to the last menu.

In addition to the toolbar, there is a pull-down menu and a Text Menu at the top of the screen. The pull-down menu has the same features as the toolbar, plus some additional features, most of which are not applicable in SPIS. In SPIS, for efficient operation of the CD, it is recommended that the toolbar and buttons on the screen be used instead of the pull-down menu (with the exception of the File/Export and File/Print features).

## Site List Display

There are many ways to display a site list in SPIS. Double-clicking on CERCLIS, Archive (NFRAP), or RODS on the Main Menu displays the browse selection screen. Each browse selection screen (CERCLIS, Archive (NFRAP), and RODS) has the following buttons:



This button displays the entire data set.

This button displays a list of preset searches.

This button displays a list of sites in the selected region.

This button displays a list of sites in the selected state.

This button displays the Main Menu.

This button displays the available Help tutorial from Folio VIEWS.

Each button, with the exception of Main Menu, lead's to a site list based upon user selections. The Query and the Contents buttons on the toolbar also lead to site lists based on user selections.

### **Menu Bar, Ribbon, Status Line**

#### **Menu Bar**

The menu bar is across the top of the screen; it contains all available commands.

#### **Ribbon**

Below the menu bar, and above the displayed menu screen, the ribbon (e.g., a white-field with grey edging on the bottom) is used to view, expand, and collapse levels. The user can also click on the text and go directly to the beginning of the region, state, or site name indicated in the ribbon.

#### **Status Line**

Located at the bottom, the status line lists the record number, the number of hits, and the query.

### **Hypertext Links**

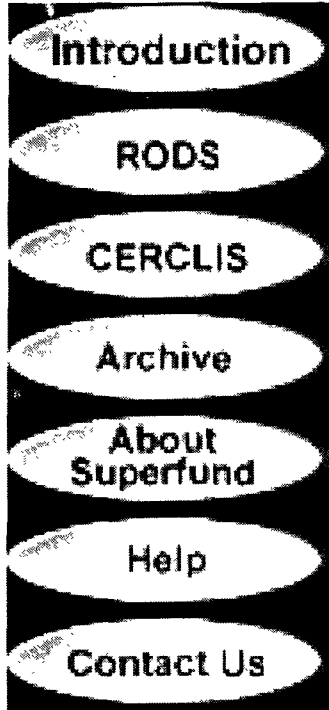
Throughout the infobases there are *hypertext links* (blue in color) that link to other relevant documents in the infobase. The Backtrack button will return the user to the previous link.

**IMPORTANT: If the screen the user is viewing becomes "locked," the Close button from the toolbar should be clicked to exit the screen.**



## Main Menu

This SPIS Main Menu is the first screen displayed upon entry into SPIS. The screen indicates the issuance date of the SPIS CD (e.g., *1st Quarter, 1999*).



This button displays a pop-up window that contains words of welcome to the user of the SPIS CD, in addition to a brief description of the type of data stored on the CD.

This button displays a menu that allows access to RODS data.

This button displays a menu that allows access to data about sites stored in CERCLIS that may have remedial actions planned for site clean up.

This button displays a menu which allows access to data about sites that have been archived (i.e., a decision has been made not to do any further remedial action at the site).

This button accesses textual information about the history of the Superfund program and how the program currently operates.

This button accesses textual information about Folio VIEWS (the software used to create SPIS).

This button displays information on how EPA can be contacted with questions or comments about the SPIS CD.

## Screens on the SPIS CD

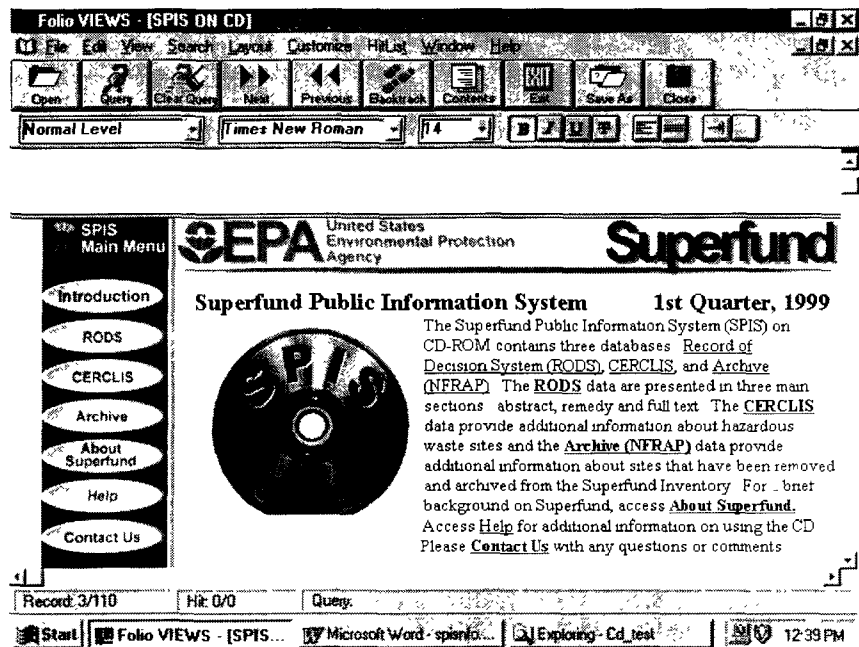
The SPIS CD now contains seven new screens that enable the user to easily access RODS, CERCLIS, and Archive (NFRAP) data. The following information describes the features found on each respective screen:

## SPIS

The SPIS Main Menu contains buttons, located on the left side of the view window, that allow the user direct access to the following areas on the CD:

- ▶ Introduction
- ▶ RODS
- ▶ CERCLIS
- ▶ Archive (NFRAP)
- ▶ About Superfund
- ▶ Help
- ▶ Contact Us

Click on any of these buttons, and the SPIS CD will take the user to that specific area of the CD.

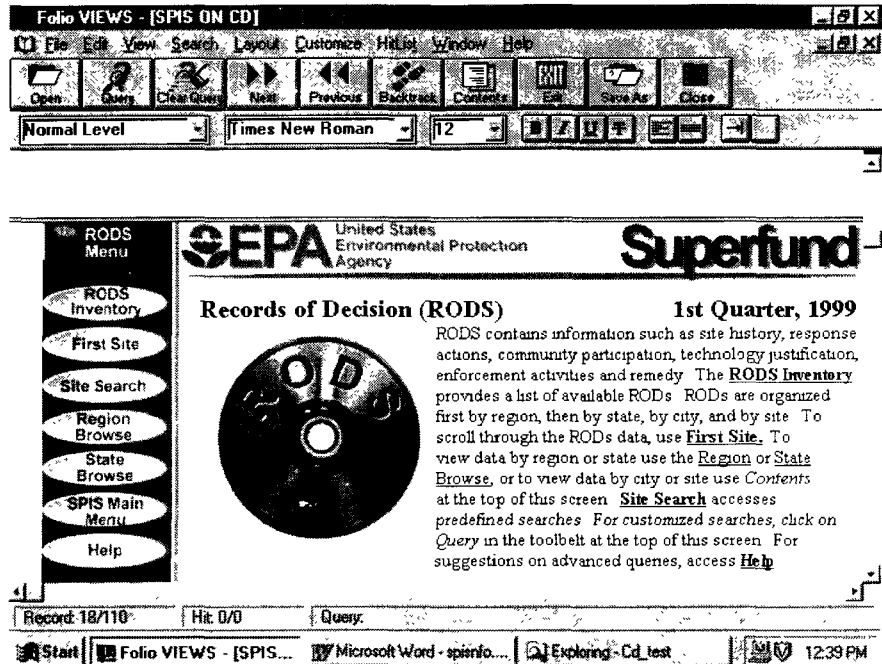


## Records of Decision System (RODS)

The RODS Menu contains buttons, located on the left side of the view window, that allow the user direct access to the following areas on the CD:

- ▶ RODS Inventory
- ▶ First Site
- ▶ Site Search
- ▶ Region Browse
- ▶ State Browse
- ▶ SPIS Main Menu
- ▶ Help

Click on any of these buttons, and the SPIS CD will take the user to that specific area of the CD.

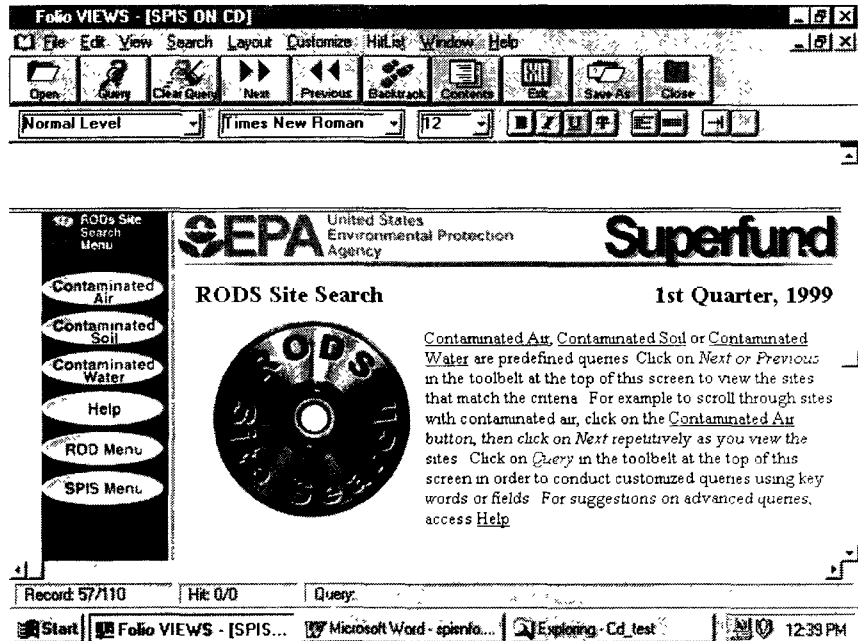


## RODS Site Search

The RODS Site Search Menu contains buttons, located on the left side of the view window, that allow the user direct access to the following areas on the CD:

- ▶ Contaminated Air
- ▶ Contaminated Soil
- ▶ Contaminated Water
- ▶ Help
- ▶ ROD Menu
- ▶ SPIS Menu

Click on any of these buttons, and the SPIS CD will take the user to that specific area of the CD.

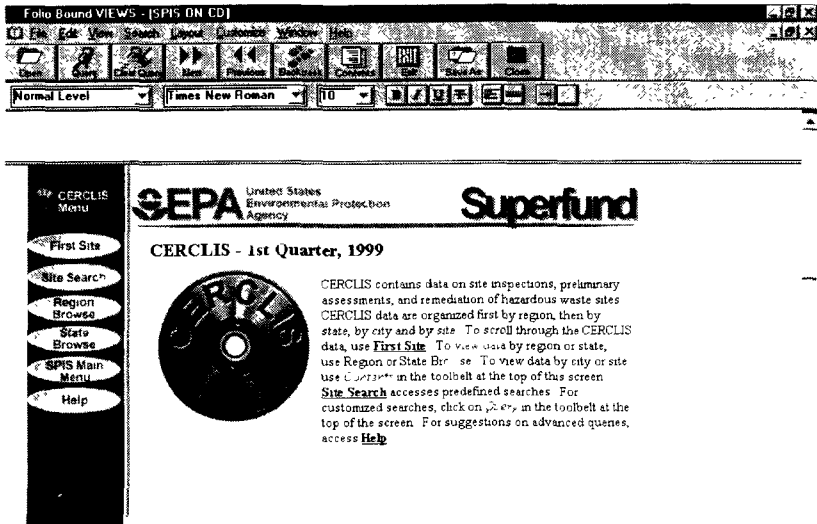


## CERCLIS

The CERCLIS Menu contains buttons, located on the left side of the view window, that allow the user direct access to the following areas on the CD:

- ▶ First Site
- ▶ Site Search
- ▶ Region Browse
- ▶ State Browse
- ▶ SPIS Main Menu
- ▶ Help

Click on any of these buttons, and the SPIS CD will take the user to that specific area of the CD.

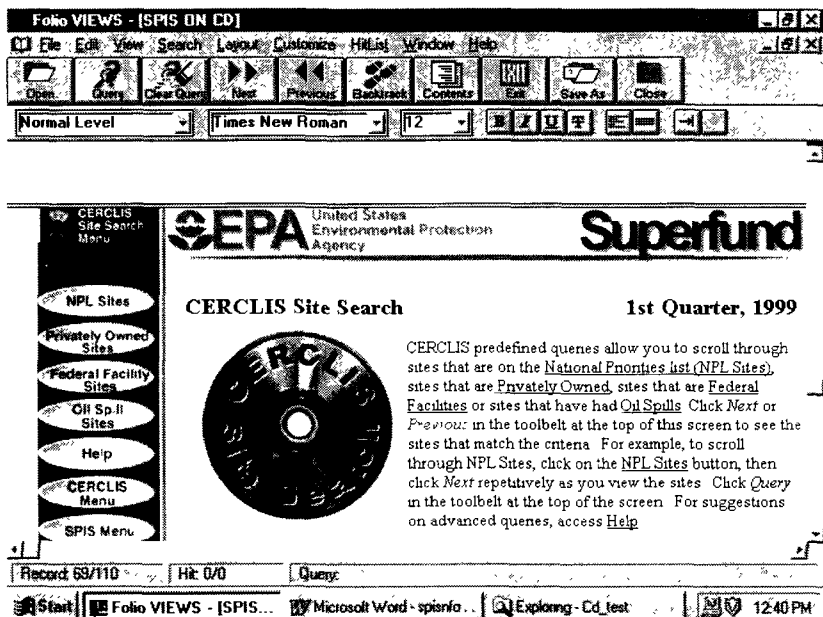


## CERCLIS Site Search

The CERCLIS Site Search Menu contains buttons, located on the left side of the view window, that allow the user direct access to the following areas on the CD:

- ▶ NPL sites
- ▶ Privately Owned Sites
- ▶ Federal Facility Sites
- ▶ Oil Spill Sites
- ▶ Help
- ▶ CERCLIS Menu
- ▶ SPIS Menu

Click on any of these buttons, and the SPIS CD will take the user to that specific area of the CD.

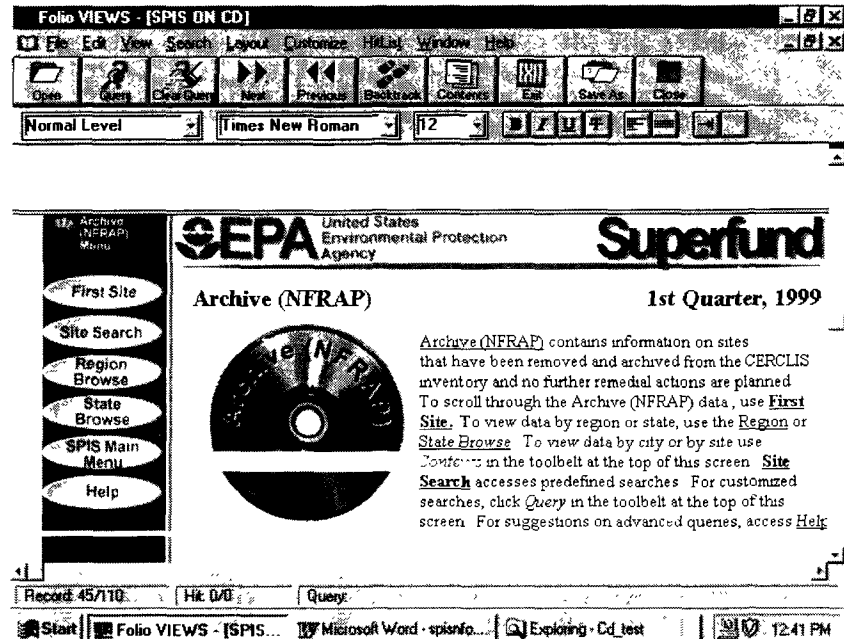


## Archive (NFRAP)

The Archive (NFRAP) Menu contains buttons, located on the left side of the view window, that allow the user direct access to the following areas on the CD:

- ▶ First Site
- ▶ Site Search
- ▶ Region Browse
- ▶ State Browse
- ▶ SPIS Main Menu
- ▶ Help

Click on any of these buttons, and the SPIS CD will take the user to that specific area of the CD.

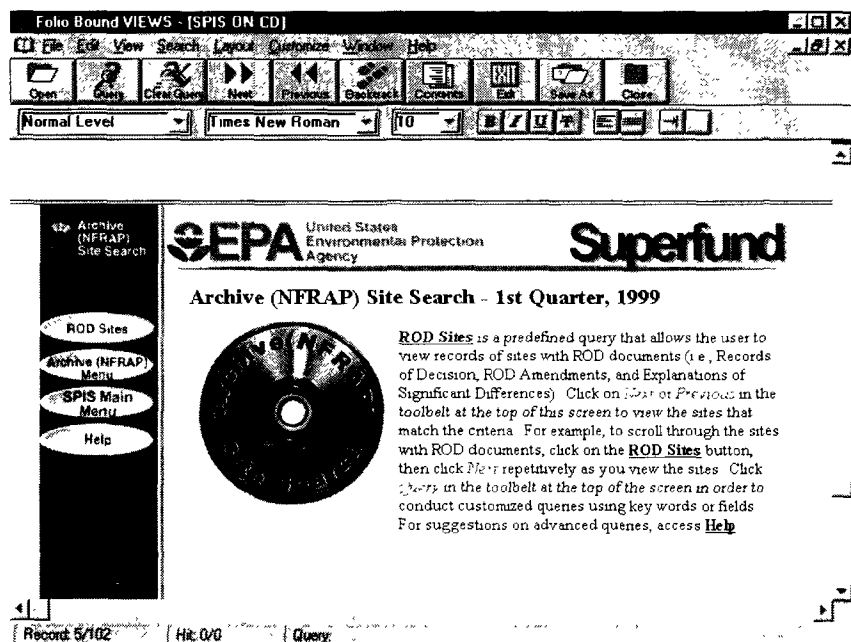


## Archive (NFRAP) Site Search

The Archive (NFRAP) Site Search Menu contains buttons, located on the left side of the view window, that allow the user direct access to the following areas on the CD:

- ▶ ROD Sites
- ▶ Archive (NFRAP) Menu
- ▶ SPIS Main Menu
- ▶ Help

Click on any of these buttons, and the SPIS CD will take the user to that specific area of the CD.



## Table of Contents

A summary list of sites, also known as a table of contents, is available when the details for a site are displayed. The summary list can be accessed by clicking on the Contents button on the toolbar. The table of contents is useful for reviewing large numbers of sites in a list format. Features of the table of contents include: the ability to expand and collapse sections (by using numbered levels 1- 9 located across the top of the screen), display the number of hits within sections, and to get direct access to the details of a specific site. The table of contents is sorted by region, state, city, and site name.

Sections within the table of contents can be expanded or collapsed. A plus sign (+) preceding an entry indicates that additional information is contained within the entry. Double-clicking the plus sign will list any entries below the plus sign. A minus sign (-) preceding an entry indicates that the entry is expanded. Double-clicking on the minus sign will terminate the display of the secondary entries. For example, double-clicking the plus sign (+) preceding the state Virginia will list the cities in Virginia with sites. The plus sign will change to a minus sign because Virginia is expanded. Double-clicking the minus sign will return the display to the original form.

The table of contents also lists the number of hits for each section. This number is listed to the left of the data.

The details of the data can be accessed directly from the table of contents. Double-clicking on a section header will display the data beginning in the selected section. Double-clicking on a site name will display the details for the site.

## Searching for Data

### Search Methods

The majority of searches may be done either by “drilling down” through the table of contents or by “filling in the keyword blanks” in one of the customized templates. The Query Box option does not normally need to be used. The Query Box requires knowledge of the appropriate boolean connectors as well as the details of the particular infobase structure in order to restrict the keywords to a particular field, level, or document.

### Preset Searches

The preset site searches in SPIS are accessed through the SPIS Screens described on pages 10 and 11. The searches work by double-clicking on the following buttons:

Screen

CERCLIS Site Search:

Button

NPL Sites

Privately Owned Sites

Federal Facility Sites

Oil Spill Sites

### Screen

RODS Site Search:

### Button

Contaminated Air  
Contaminated Soil  
Contaminated Water

\*EXAMPLE: To perform a preset site search for *NPL Sites*:

1. Select *CERCLIS* from the SPIS Main Menu.
2. Select *Site Search* from the CERCLIS Menu screen.
3. Select *NPL Sites* from the CERCLIS Site Search Menu.

All sites that are designated as NPL sites will now be displayed in the site list. The Previous and Next buttons in the toolbar can be used to navigate the sites with hits. In addition, the Clear Query button can be used to remove the NPL sites from the list of sites with hits.

### **Viewing Results**

Choosing View (from the Menu Bar) allows the user to toggle between viewing Table of Contents (i.e., listing the number of hits) or Document (i.e., full text). The options under View change depending on whether Table of Contents or Document is clicked.

### Viewing Hits Using Table of Contents

To make it easier to zero in on relevant “hits,” change View (on Menu Bar) to “Table of Contents.” This allows the user to “drill down” through the table of contents, the number of hits within each heading and subheading is displayed. By drilling down through the Table of Contents, or the user can check those headings with the most hits. Options under the Table of Contents View include Words Around Hits and Headings With Hits.

### **Using the SPIS Query Functions**

#### Simple Keyword Search

**\*IMPORTANT: The site list from the Browse Selection screen must be displayed before a keyword search can be performed.** See Site List Display on page 6 for additional information. For detailed instructions on how to use the Query feature, refer to the Help menu on the pull-down menu at the top of the screen.

A search can be done for any word or combination of words in the data. For example, to search for a word or combination of words:

1. Select *CERCLIS* from the SPIS Main Menu.
2. Select *First Site* from the CERCLIS Menu screen.
3. Select *Query* from the toolbar.
4. Enter the keywords to be included in the search (e.g., “**epa/rod/r09-96/143**” will

produce site information for **Camp Pendleton MCB**).

5. Select OK. A site list is displayed. The first query hit is highlighted. Use the Next or Previous buttons to move throughout the site list.

The keywords can be separated by spaces or the pipe symbol (|). Separating keywords with spaces specifies using AND logic. Separating keywords using the pipe symbol specifies using OR logic. For example, "lead iron | asbestos" means find all sites that contain the words "lead" AND "iron" OR "asbestos."

A "tree" will form on the right side of the Query dialogue box as the keywords are entered. This tree indicates the number of hits that will result from the keyword search. The word wheel on the left side of the Query dialogue box displays all of the words in the data.

### **Advanced Keyword Search**

To search for all CERCLIS sites that have related RODS data, a *complex search* must be used. This complex search involves searching the contents of a field. A field is a specific data item within a site. In this case the field to search is the RODS Indicator. The technique described below can be used for searching any field or combination of fields within the Superfund Public Information System. To find all CERCLIS sites with RODS data:

1. Select the Query dialogue box from the toolbar or the Search Menu.
2. Select the open bracket symbol ([]) in the bottom left corner of the Query dialogue box.
3. Select Field from the Scope box.
4. Double-click on Field.
5. Select RODS Indicator from the Field list.
6. Select Yes from the word list.
7. Select the close bracket symbol (]) in the bottom left corner of the Query dialogue box.
8. Select OK.

All of the CERCLIS sites with related RODS information are listed as hits. The first site is displayed. The Previous and Next buttons on the toolbar are available for navigating from one hit to the next. Selecting the Contents button on the toolbar will display the sites in a list format. The query can be cleared by using the Clear Query button on the toolbar.

### **Printing and Downloading**

#### **Printing**

Provided there is a printer attached to the workstation, there are several options from which to choose.



## For Screen-Selected Hardcopy Output

1. Highlight the text to be printed.
2. Choose Print from the File Menu.
3. The pop-up Print Document Box option is automatically set to *Selection*.  
The number of records selected is also automatically displayed.
4. Select the number of copies to be printed.
5. Select OK.

## For Print Document Box-Selected Hardcopy Output

1. Choose Print from File (Menu Bar).
2. The pop-up Print Document Box option for *Records* must be selected.
3. Specify the record numbers to be printed (From...To...).
4. Select the number of copies to be printed.
5. Select OK.

The user of this CD also has the option of downloading their output to a file on their computer's hard drive by selecting *Print to File*.

## Export

To export all or part of CERCLIS, NFRAP or RODs data:

1. Block highlight the data to export using the mouse, or determine the starting and ending record numbers of the records to be exported.
2. Choose Save As from the File menu.
3. Choose the file type of the export file from the List Files of Type dialogue box.
4. Enter the Range if needed.
5. Enter the export File Name, Drive, and Directory.
6. Choose OK to save the selected data.

## Help

To call for help or to make comments, please use the contact information below. Please provide your name and a daytime phone number.

Contact: Margret Brown  
Address: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Office of Emergency and Remedial Response  
401 M Street, S.W. (5202G)  
Washington, DC 20460

Phone: 703-603-8876  
Fax: 703-603-9505

E-mail:

brown.margret@epamail.epa.gov

**Disclaimer**

The information contained herein is prepared by and distributed by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Publisher cannot provide any warranty as to the accuracy or source of information contained herein, and any reliance on the information is solely at the user's own risk. Publisher is not responsible for any errors or omission in or for the results obtained from the use of the information. The information is provided "as is" with no guarantees of completeness, accuracy, or timeliness, and without any warranties, express or implied. To the fullest extent provided by law, Publisher disclaims all warranties, express or implied, including but not limited to implied warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose. Users should consult source documents issued by the EPA prior to any reliance thereon.