Registered Environmental Manager Practice Exam

This 12-question Registered Environmental Manager practice paper is a realistic check across environmental compliance, environmental regulations, and EPA regulations. Choose an answer before reading the note; recurring misses will show where focused review can help most.

Syllabus balance for this practice paper

Objective	Weight	Review area
Environmental Compliance	25%	Environmental regulations and hazardous waste management
Environmental Management	25%	Management systems, auditing, and corrective action
Environmental Planning	25%	Alternatives, NEPA review, and approvals
Environmental Science and Technology	25%	Contaminant fate, toxicology, and environmental risk assessment

Registered Environmental Manager skills: environmental regulations and hazardous waste management

1. *Easy* — Which statement best defines environmental compliance?

- A. Meeting applicable requirements and demonstrating consistent adherence.
- B. Voluntarily reducing resource use.
- C. Completing a one-time environmental risk assessment.
- D. Establishing an environmental management system.

Answer: A

A states the core definition: conformance to applicable requirements. D describes an environmental management system, which supports compliance but is broader.

2. *Medium* — A discarded solvent-based coating has a 10°F flash point. What is the strongest statement under RCRA?

- A. It is excluded because solvents are recycled.
- B. It is regulated only after EPA lists it by name.
- C. It meets RCRA's ignitability characteristic unless a specific exclusion applies.
- D. It is hazardous waste only if it is also corrosive.

Answer: C

A 10°F flash point meets RCRA's 140°F ignitability threshold; listing is unnecessary.**Trap:** A is wrong because recycling does not automatically exclude a discarded solvent.

3. *Hard* — Before buying a contaminated property, a landowner completes due diligence. Which combination supports CERCLA's landowner defense?

- A. The site was purchased before disposal, without prevention steps or cooperation.
- B. EPA listed the property for cleanup.
- C. The property meets state residential soil standards.
- D. Disposal preceded acquisition, reasonable steps were taken, and the cooperation condition is met.

Answer: D

D combines pre-acquisition disposal, reasonable prevention steps, and the statutory cooperation and information condition. **Trap:** C is wrong because meeting state standards does not itself eliminate CERCLA liability.

Environmental management and compliance auditing

4. *Easy* — What distinguishes an environmental management system from a single compliance audit?

- A. An EMS is an audit conducted after a release.
- B. An EMS is a structured, documented framework for objectives, controls, and improvement.
- C. An EMS is limited to an annual legal review.
- D. An EMS is a one-time assessment of contaminant fate.

Answer: B

B describes a systematic framework applied across the organization. **Trap:** A is wrong because a post-release audit is one compliance activity, not the defining feature of an EMS.

5. *Medium* — Which finding provides the strongest evidence that hazardous waste was properly disposed?

- A. Shipping documents reconcile with treatment records, and inspection confirms required controls.
- B. An employee recalls that the waste was recycled.
- C. The facility reports no releases for five years.
- D. The generator says an unknown vendor handled the shipment.

Answer: A

A uses objective, contemporaneous evidence corroborated by direct observation. **Trap:** B is wrong because recollection alone cannot verify the treatment process.

6. *Hard* — Repeated spills follow an unclear secondary-containment procedure. What is the strongest corrective and preventive action?

- A. Reissue the procedure and train staff once.
- B. Close the finding because no reportable release occurred.
- C. Investigate root causes, improve controls, verify effectiveness, and prevent recurrence.
- D. Lower the internal reporting threshold without changing the procedure.

Answer: C

C addresses causes, controls, and effectiveness, supporting durable corrective and preventive action. **Trap:** A is wrong because retraining alone may not correct a procedure-design failure.

Environmental planning and NEPA review

7. *Easy* — Which activity is environmental planning rather than compliance monitoring?

- A. Tracking permit conditions after approval.
- B. Auditing waste records.
- C. Correcting deviations from an existing permit.
- D. Comparing site-use alternatives, stakeholder needs, and approval requirements.

Answer: D

D concerns future actions, alternatives, and approvals before implementation. **Trap:** A is wrong because tracking existing permit conditions is compliance monitoring.

8. *Medium* — A federal project has no categorical exclusion, and significant environmental effects have not been adequately evaluated. What must the agency prepare?

- A. An environmental assessment only.
- B. An environmental impact statement.
- C. A finding of no significant impact.

- D. A categorical exclusion.

Answer: B

An environmental impact statement is required when significant impacts may occur and are not adequately resolved. **Trap:** A is wrong because an environmental assessment alone is insufficient when significant effects remain.

9. *Hard* — After an adequate alternatives and impacts analysis, an agency selects an alternative. Which statement best describes NEPA's legal role?

- A. NEPA requires adequate analysis and disclosure, but it does not dictate the selected alternative.
- B. NEPA requires the selected alternative to have zero environmental effects.
- C. A finding of no significant impact approves the project and prevents later challenges.
- D. NEPA itself selects the environmentally preferable alternative.

Answer: A

A accurately describes NEPA as procedural and decision-supporting.**Trap:** D is wrong because the agency chooses; the analysis informs that decision.

Environmental science and environmental risk assessment

10. *Easy* — Methylmercury concentrations rise from plankton to small fish to predatory fish. Which process is occurring?

- A. Sorption.
- B. Bioaccumulation.
- C. Biomagnification.
- D. Dilution.

Answer: C

Increasing concentration across trophic levels defines biomagnification. **Trap:** B is wrong because bioaccumulation describes uptake within one organism over time.

11. *Medium* — During a 100-day exposure, a 20-kg child drinks 0.5 L/day of water containing a contaminant at 20 µg/L. What is the average dose?

- A. 0.05 µg/kg-day.
- B. 5 µg/kg-day.
- C. 50 µg/kg-day.
- D. 0.5 µg/kg-day.

Answer: D

Worked calculation: Intake is 20 µg/L × 0.5 L/day = 10 µg/day; dividing by 20 kg gives 0.5 µg/kg-day, unchanged across the same 100 days. **Trap:** C divides total exposure by body weight but forgets to average across days.

12. *Hard* — An adult is exposed to a carcinogen for 30 years. Under EPA's conventional lifetime-average-dose approach, how is lifetime risk calculated?

- A. Average the exposure over 30 years because that is the lifetime.
- B. Use the exposure duration in the risk equation and average the dose over a lifetime, typically 70 years.
- C. Ignore exposure duration and use only the final concentration.
- D. Multiply the maximum daily dose by 30 without averaging.

Answer: B

B reflects EPA's lifetime-average-dose convention for cancer risk.**Trap:** A is wrong because using only 30 years as the averaging period

would generally overstate lifetime risk.

Conclusion: build confidence for the Registered Environmental Manager exam

Treat missed questions as a map, not a setback. Review the relevant objective, explain the correct rule aloud, and return to similar EPA regulations, hazardous waste management, and environmental risk assessment questions until the reasoning feels familiar.

Frequently asked questions

How should I use this practice paper?

Read each stem and all four options before opening the explanation. For every miss, write the governing rule and explain why the tempting option failed.

What if my score is lower than expected?

Use the domain totals to choose one or two objectives for focused review. Then answer the missed questions again from memory before moving forward with confidence.