



Targeting oils in soils

Global demand for soil contamination detection tool.



The RemScan hand-gun device allows for on-site, rapid detection of soil contamination eliminating the costly time required for lab testing.

It is the world's first cost-effective, portable method for the direct measurement of oils in soils.

Ziltek's RemScan device allows for on-site, rapid detection of hydrocarbon contamination in soils, removing the time delays and cost of sending soil samples to a lab for analysis.

The user simply brings the RemScan device into contact with the soil to be tested, pulls the trigger and waits 15 seconds for a result, enabling customers to make real time decisions during emergency spill response and site remediation work.

The new technology is attracting interest from environmental consultants, remediation contractors, the pipeline industry and oil exploration and mining operators. And, Australian and global demand is gathering momentum, with sales or trials underway with leading mining and oil and gas companies across several Australian states and internationally.

Launched in the United States in May last year, the RemScan was independently validated for accuracy and usability by the international testing agency Battelle, showing excellent results at two US Department of Defense sites in California.

Two US patents were granted for RemScan in late 2014 and the first global sales followed in January 2015, with customers including a major oil company operating in Nigeria and a commercial analytics lab in Italy.

Whilst direct sales to larger organisations represent a significant global market opportunity, Ziltek also sees service opportunities for the device, where it will hire the gun to clients along with a skilled operator to do the scanning.

Industry demand

South Australian-based Ziltek produced the first early working prototypes of its pistol-like RemScan technology in 2011, following over four years of research and development with the CSIRO on the use of infrared spectroscopy.

Until RemScan, the approach for measuring petroleum hydrocarbon contamination in soils involved collecting and sending soil samples to an off-site lab for analysis. In Australia this can cost more than \$50 per sample and can take five to ten days.

Waiting for lab results delays site remediation work, and costs mount, with expensive machinery retained on standby rates. Industry was demanding a quicker, cheaper and more portable method.

The first commercial ready version of the RemScan instrument was completed in late 2012. From that point, Ziltek managing director, Dr Richard Stewart, says Australian Government commercialisation advice and funding "was pivotal".

"Even with such a strong product, moving out of R&D and into the sales stage in a challenging market required a totally different skills set," Stewart says.

"The grant enabled us to employ an oil and gas industry expert with 25 years executive level sales and marketing experience, at a senior level within our company—without the grant, we would have struggled to do that.

"We have leveraged these networks to establish important early relationships and sales in Australia, and that has in turn supported Ziltek's push into international markets."

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