

# GEOPHYSICAL TECHNIQUES FOR SHALLOW ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTIGATIONS



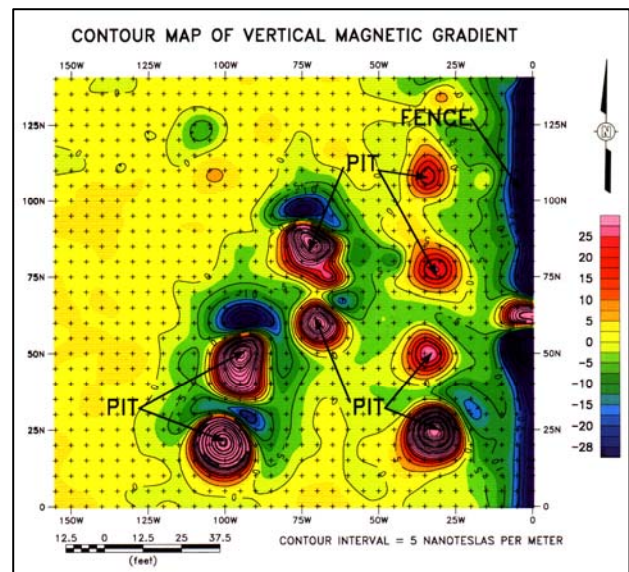
## MAGNETIC METHOD

The magnetic method generally involves the measurement of the earth's magnetic field intensity or vertical gradient of the earth's magnetic field. Anomalies in the earth's magnetic field are caused by induced or remanent magnetism. Induced magnetic anomalies are the result of secondary magnetization induced in a ferrous body by the earth's magnetic field. The shape and amplitude of an induced magnetic anomaly is a function of the orientation, geometry, size, depth, and magnetic susceptibility of the body as well as the intensity and inclination of the earth's magnetic field in the survey area. The magnetic method is an effective way to search for small metallic objects, such as buried ordnance and drums, because magnetic anomalies have spatial dimensions much larger than those of the objects themselves. Typically, a single buried drum can be detected to a depth of about 10 feet. Larger metallic objects can often be located to greater depths. Induced magnetic anomalies over buried objects such as drums, pipes, tanks, and buried metallic debris generally exhibit an asymmetrical, south up/north down signature (positive response south of the object and negative response to the north).

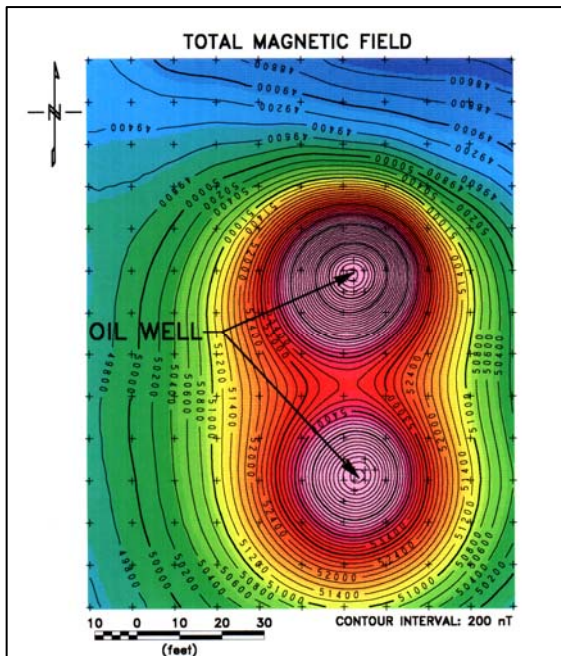
Magnetic data is typically acquired along a grid with results being presented as color-enhanced contour maps generated by the Geosoft™ Mapping System or OASIS montaj. The approximate location and depth of magnetic objects can be calculated using the Geosoft™ UXO System.



**Geometrics G858 Cesium Magnetic Gradiometer**



**Magnetic Survey to Locate Pits Containing Buried Metallic Containers**



**Magnetic Survey to Locate Abandoned Oil Wells**

Magnetic surveys are typically conducted to:

- Locate abandoned steel well casings
- Locate buried tanks and pipes
- Locate pits and trenches containing buried metallic debris
- Detect buried unexploded ordnance (UXO)
- Map old waste sites and landfill boundaries
- Clear drilling locations
- Map basement faults and geology
- Investigate archaeological sites

## ELECTROMAGNETIC METHODS

Electromagnetic (EM) methods typically applied to shallow environmental investigations include frequency domain EM methods, such as EM induction and EM utility location methods, time domain electromagnetic (TDEM) metal detection methods, and ground penetrating radar (GPR) methods.

### EM Induction Method

EM induction surveys are often conducted using the Geonics EM-31 terrain conductivity meter (EM-31). The EM-31 consists of a transmitter coil mounted at one end and a receiver coil mounted at the other end of a 3.7-meter long plastic boom. Electrical conductivity and in-phase component field strength are measured and stored along with line and station numbers in a digital data logger. In-phase component measurements generally only respond to buried metallic objects; whereas conductivity measurements also respond to conductivity variations caused by changes in soil type, moisture or salinity and the presence of nonmetallic bulk wastes. The EM-31 must pass over or immediately adjacent to a buried metallic object to detect it. Typical EM-31 anomalies over small, buried metallic objects consist of a negative response centered over the object and a lower amplitude positive response to the sides of the object. When the instrument boom is oriented parallel to long,

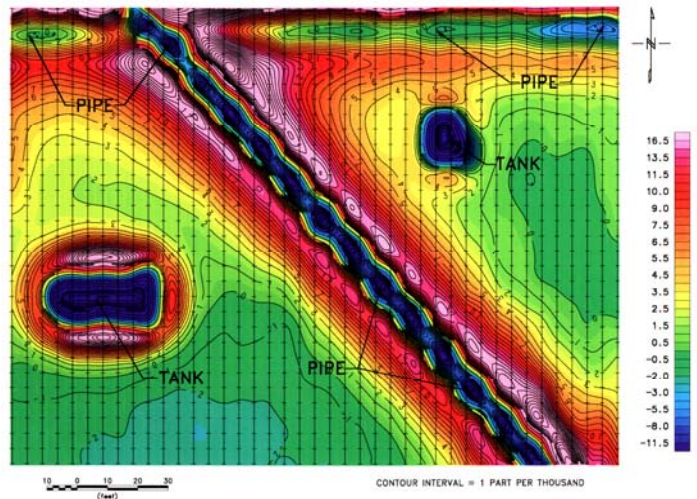
linear conductors such as pipelines a strong positive response is observed. The EM-31 can explore to depths of about 6 meters, but is most sensitive to materials about 1 meter below ground surface. Single buried drums can typically be detected to depths of about 5 feet.

EM-31 surveys are typically conducted to:

- Locate buried tanks and pipes
- Locate pits and trenches containing metallic and/or nonmetallic debris
- Delineate landfill boundaries
- Delineate oil production sumps and mud pits
- Map conductive soil and groundwater contamination
- Map soil salinity in agricultural areas
- Characterize shallow subsurface hydrogeology
  - Map buried channel deposits
  - Locate sand and gravel deposits
  - Locate conductive fault and fracture zones



**Geonics EM-31 Terrain Conductivity Meter**



**Geonics EM-31 Survey to Locate Underground Storage Tanks**



### EM Utility Location Methods

EM utility locators; such as the Metrotech 810, Metrotech 9890 and Radiodetection RD400, are designed to accurately trace metallic pipes and utility cables and clear drilling/excavation locations. These utility locators consist of a separate transmitter and a receiver. The transmitter emits a radio frequency EM field that induces secondary fields in nearby metallic pipes and cables. The receiver detects these fields and is used to accurately locate and trace the pipes, often to distances over 200 feet from the transmitter. Many of the utility locators have a passive 60Hz mode to locate live electrical lines. Modern utility locators are also capable of providing rough depth estimates of the pipes.

← **Metrotech EM Utility Locator**

## TDEM Metal Detection Methods

A Geonics EM-61 (EM-61) is a high sensitivity, time-domain, digital metal detector which is often used to detect both ferrous and non-ferrous metallic objects. It is designed specifically to locate buried metallic objects such as drums, tanks, pipes, UXO, and metallic debris and to be relatively insensitive to above ground structures such as fences, buildings, and vehicles.

The EM-61 consists of two square, 1-meter coils, one mounted over the other and arranged on a hand-towed cart. The bottom coil acts as both a transmitter and receiver while the top coil is a receiver only. While transmitting the bottom coil generates a pulsed primary magnetic field, which induces eddy currents into nearby metallic objects. When the transmitter is in its off cycle both coils measure the decay of these eddy currents in millivolts (mV) with the results being stored in a digital data logger along with position information. The decay of the eddy currents is proportional to the size and depth of the metallic target. A symmetrical positive anomaly is recorded over metallic objects with the peak centered over the object.

The signal from the top coil is amplified in such a way that both coils record effectively the same response for a metallic object on the surface and the top coil records a larger response for buried metallic objects. The response of near surface objects can, therefore, be suppressed by subtracting the lower coil response from the upper coil response (differential response).

In practice, the usable depth of investigation of the EM-61 depends on the size and shape of the object and the amount of above ground interference encountered at the site. A single buried drum can often be detected at a depth of about 10 feet.

### Geonics EM-61 Survey to Map Subsurface Infrastructure



## GPR Methods

Ground-penetrating radar (GPR) is a high-frequency electromagnetic method commonly applied to a number of engineering and environmental problems.



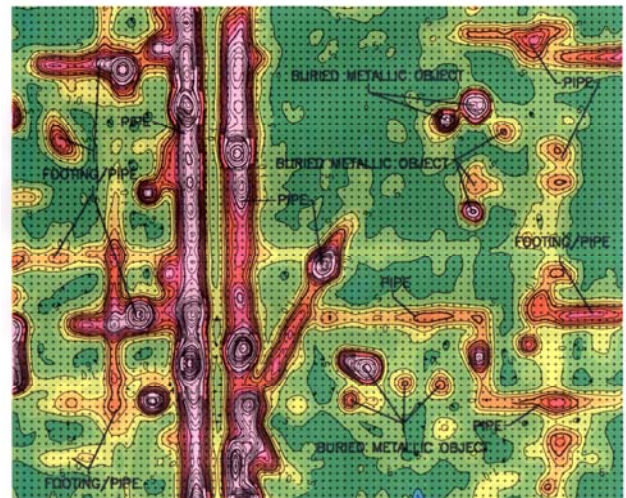
**GSSI SIR-10A GPR Unit**

A GPR system radiates short pulses of high-frequency EM energy into the ground from a transmitting antenna. This EM wave propagates into the ground at a velocity that is primarily a function of the relative dielectric permittivity of subsurface materials. When this wave encounters the interface of two materials having different dielectric properties, a portion of the energy is reflected back to the surface, where it is detected by a receiver antenna and transmitted to a control unit for processing and display.

Depth penetration is a function of antenna frequency and the electrical conductivity of the soils in the survey area. Lower frequency antennas achieve greater depth penetration than higher frequency antennas, but have poorer spatial resolution. Conductive soils, such as clays, attenuate the radar waves much more rapidly than resistive dry sand and rock. In many environments in California, depth penetration of 500 and 300 MHz antennas is limited to 3 to 5 feet. Depth penetration may be greater if shallow soils consist of clean sands and less if shallow soils consist of clay.



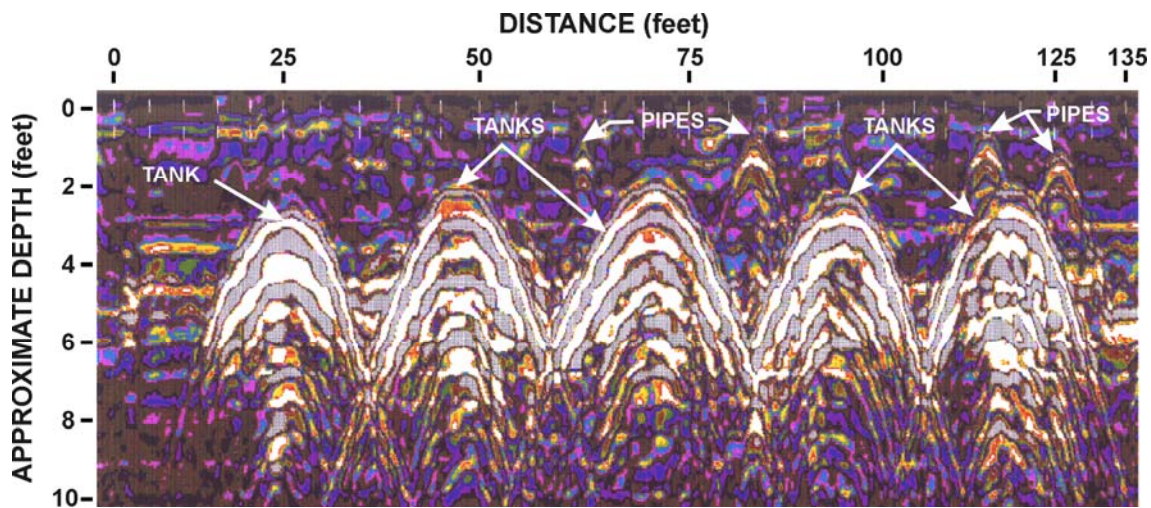
**Geonics EM-61 Digital Metal Detector**



GPR surveys are typically conducted to:

- Locate and delineate underground storage tanks (metallic and non-metallic)
- Locate metallic and nonmetallic pipes and utility cables
- Map rebar in concrete structures
- Map landfill boundaries
- Delineate pits and trenches containing metallic and nonmetallic debris
- Delineate leach fields and industrial cribs
- Delineate previously excavated and backfilled areas
- Map shallow groundwater tables
- Map shallow soil stratigraphy
- Map shallow bedrock topography
- Map shallow subsurface voids and cavities
- Characterize archaeological sites

Geophysical Survey Systems Inc. (GSSI) SIR-2 or SIR-10 GPR systems with antennas in the frequency range of 50 to 1,000 MHz are often used during GPR investigations. Mala Geoscience and Sensors and Software, Ltd also manufacture GPR systems. GPR data is processed using a variety of software including the RADAN™ or GRADIX software packages by GSSI and Interpex Ltd., respectively.



***GPR Survey to Locate Underground Storage Tanks***