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Soil remediation is an expression most people don't want to hear...during their lifetime.

If you don't have a clue what that means, think about gas station graveyards. Those are the old filling stations which have been torn down, the pavement ripped up and the property enclosed behind high fences while the owners deal with removing oil and petroleum products which have contaminated the earth and even the groundwater.

The remediation process can take years. And the longer it takes, the more expensive it becomes.

Now meet George Ivey, a 41-year-old, fast-talking, science whiz and businessman who has spent the better part of his career dealing with soil remediation and earning a solid international reputation along the way.

"I've been doing this for 19 years and I've worked around the world," says Ivey, seated at his dining-room table in Campbell River.

At this point, cleaning up old gas station sites isn't high on Ivey's priority list but he could do it – and fast. "A regular gas station, I would say, would take a year to 18 months," he figures.

Ivey, who goes by the nickname Bud, is president and senior remediation specialist for Ivey International Inc. whose slogan is: Today's environmental solutions for a better tomorrow." If that sounds like a trite commercial expression, think again.

In 2004, Ivey International was a nominee for the prestigious Globe Awards. Sponsored by the Globe Foundation of Canada and The Globe and Mail newspaper, the awards are "presented to extraordinary companies and industry groups who have managed to balance competitive business strategies with sustainable development." Ivey's company wasn't a finalist that year but the nomination, he says, was an honour. However, this year the company is a finalist for The Corporate Award for Technology Innovation and Application.

This Friday, Ivey will be in Vancouver with his wife – an RCMP officer – his mother and colleagues for the 2006 Globe Awards.

"It's pretty amazing and kind of cool to be a finalist when you consider there are thousands of submissions," he says. "But I didn't get there alone – I'm a person with vision, desires and drive, and I'm fortunate to be surrounded by people who have helped me get to where I am."

Ivey was raised in New Brunswick. As a kid growing up in the 1970s, he became attuned to the growing interest in environmental awareness.

After high school, he entered the University of New Brunswick but, at the time, there were no courses or degrees in environmental studies.

So Ivey earned degrees in organic chemistry which provided the background for a career in working with environmental problems. In 1992, at age 28, he branched off and created his own company.

More importantly, he developed Ivey-sol, a patented technology which speeds up and greatly improves soil remediation. In basic terms, Ivey-sol is injected into the earth resulting in a reaction which allows soil and fractured bedrock surfaces to desorb contaminants such as petroleum products, PCBs, chlorinated solvents and heavy metals. This allows for easier, and more complete, removal of contamination using pumps.

"We haven't failed yet on any site – knock on wood," Ivey says with laugh as he raps his knuckles on the table. As mentioned earlier, contaminated service stations are not his main priority but he does have some experience in dealing with that particular problem. In the spring of 2001, Ivey was invited to examine a private business school in Moncton, NB.

The school was situated in an old Shell Oil service station and below the building was an estimated 600 gallons of fuel-oil. The slick was impacting the foundation of the building as well as sending foul-smelling gas into the



Remediation 101: George Ivey, president of Ivey International Inc., specializes in remediation of contaminated soil using a patented technology. His Campbell River-based company is a finalist for a prestigious Globe Award. The awards take place on Friday in Vancouver.

classrooms. The traditional methods of soil remediation did not look promising. A pump-and-treat method would have taken about five years to complete and bioremediation was estimated to take four years. Even then, it was doubtful if these methods could completely remove the contamination. That's when Ivey International was brought in to look at the problem. Eighteen months later, the contamination was gone. The cost: \$150,000. "It's an effective tool for desorbing contamination," says Ivey. His technology also has the potential to improve remove oil sand recovery in Alberta. His secretary once told him they should sell it in a spray bottle to remove oil stains from garments or spilled oil from driveways. "Who knows, perhaps one day," says Ivey.

In 2001, Ivey and his wife moved to Campbell River after she was transferred to the local RCMP detachment. Locally, Ivey helped Quinsam Coal remediate diesel- and PH-contaminated soil and as did some work for Yellow Island Aquaculture based on Quadra Island. Campbell River is now his international base and Ivey travels regularly to all corners of the globe. But this Friday the couple will be together in Vancouver where Ivey hopes to claim a Globe Award. "Being a finalist lends a lot of credence to your technology - and that's what we are, a technology provider," he points out. "I hope to have our table surrounded with all the people who helped make this possible and that's important." The one thing I've learned is that business humbles you and I'm grateful for all the support I've received...it's fun and I'm enjoying the ride “

For more information about Ivey International, visit the website at www.iveyinternational.com