



Preparing for an Underground Storage Tank Inspection

Mission Statement:

Ecology's Underground Storage Tank Program protects the environment and people of Washington by developing, administering, and enforcing fair, effective regulations, and by providing knowledgeable and competent technical assistance to the regulated community.

Washington State Underground Storage Tank Regulations (Chapter 173-360 WAC) were enacted in 1990.

Washington currently has 8 full time inspectors to complete inspections, investigations and provide technical assistance to Underground Storage Tank (UST) owners and operators.

During the 1990's the focus in Washington and all across the nation was on meeting the UST upgrade standards deadline of December 1998. Now, the emphasis of UST programs across the nation is shifting toward the proper operation and maintenance of UST equipment.

What Is An Underground Storage Tank Inspection?

Ecology has two different inspection methods available to UST owners or operators; a technical assistance inspection or a compliance inspection. Both are intended to make sure equipment is properly installed, operated, and maintained. This helps you, the owner/operator, to protect the environment and your business by ensuring that petroleum leaks are detected early or even prevented, saving possibly thousands of dollars in cleanup costs.

A technical assistance inspection is conducted at your request, and will cover only the areas that you

request. Your technical assistance inspection may consist of an examination of your tanks, lines, and inventory records. If your site is not in compliance with the State standards, you will receive a Notice of Non-Compliance (NONC). On this form will be a list of actions that need to be taken and a time schedule in order to achieve compliance with your UST system. During a technical assistance inspection, fines will only be considered in extreme cases involving severe or deliberate violations of the regulations .

A compliance inspection is initiated by an Ecology UST Inspector and will cover your entire UST system. At the close of the inspection, a determination will be made regarding operational compliance based on the condition of the UST system. If you are out of compliance, you will be issued a NONC, which will identify the issues that need to be resolved, and a schedule to achieve compliance. You may also be subject to a field citation or penalty for not being in compliance. If compliance is not achieved in a timely manner or severe violations are found, Ecology may then pursue formal enforcement action and/or higher penalties.

How Should I Prepare For An Inspection?

A typical inspection will take approximately one to two hours. Most inspections are scheduled in advance with the operator. However, inspections may be conducted without prior notice.

If you have any doubt concerning your ability to meet the requirements of a thorough inspection, Ecology highly recommends that you contact a certified UST service provider to assist you during the inspection. The Ecology inspector is there to review records and observe the operation of equipment. The inspector will not operate the equipment or open containment covers for you.

Please have the following available at the time of inspection:

- Knowledgeable person on site that understands the operation/management of the UST system, including basic information about the tank equipment, sizes, installation date, product stored, etc.
- Knowledgeable person on site that will remove covers from turbine sumps, probes, fill pipes, and open dispensers. You should have all the necessary keys and tools to provide access as required.
- Knowledgeable person on site that is prepared to test release detection, spill and overflow equipment.
- Release detection records for tanks and piping for the last 12 months (i.e. manual inventory control records, automatic tank gauge leak rate reports, tightness test results). Be prepared to verify the operation of release detection equipment (i.e. Automatic tank gauge, interstitial monitors, and groundwater monitoring systems).
- UST facility compliance tag
- Current Master Business License (MBL) with tank endorsement
- Proof of financial responsibility
- Be prepared to verify the operation of overflow prevention devices (ball float valves, automatic shutoff devices, overflow alarms).
- Be prepared to verify spill prevention devices. Are the containment devices clean and dry?
- Provide results of all required cathodic protection system tests. For impressed current systems, have the 60 day log present and up to date.

To Find More Information

Find more information on underground storage tank requirements on Ecology's website at:

<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/cleanup.html>

Ecology inspectors are always available to answer any regulatory questions or provide technical assistance. Each inspector carries copies of various guidance documents that they will provide to you.

Please contact the Ecology Regional Office listed below to find the inspector responsible for your area.

Northwest Regional Office

3190 160th Ave SE
Bellevue, WA 98008
(425) 649-7000
Island, King, Kitsap, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish and Whatcom counties

Central Regional Office

15 W. Yakima Ave
Yakima, WA 98902
(509) 575-2490
Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Kittitas, Klickitat, Okanogan, and Yakima counties

Eastern Regional Office

4601 N. Monroe
Spokane, WA 99205
(509) 329-3400
Adams, Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Walla Walla, and Whitman counties

Southwest Regional Office

300 Desmond Dr
Lacey, WA 98503
(360) 407-6300
Clallam, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, Pierce, Thurston, and Wahkiakum counties

Vancouver Field Office

2108 Grand Blvd
Vancouver, WA 98661
(360) 690-7166
Clark and Skamania counties

If you have special accommodation needs, call (360) 407-6000 (voice) or 1-(800) 833-6388 or 711 (TTY).