

Update on the Underground Storage Tank Law

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) modified its underground storage tank (UST) compliance inspection program because of new federal and state legislation. The amended state UST law took effect in July 2007. The federal Energy Policy Act of 2005 placed new requirements on states and the federal government. These new requirements, including more frequent compliance inspections, are designed to help prevent or reduce leaks to the environment from UST systems (tanks, pipes and dispensers). Leaks can and do pollute groundwater, a precious resource which supplies drinking water for 60 percent of Washingtonians.

How are UST owners and operators affected by the change?

Annual tank permit fees (UST endorsements on a Master Business License) are increasing from \$140 per tank to \$160 starting July 2009. This “potential” fee increase identified in the state law was contingent on whether Washington State received sufficient grant funds from the federal Environmental Protection Agency. Washington State did not receive additional money. Federal and state laws require inspectors to examine UST systems at least once every three years. To accomplish this, Ecology needed to hire more inspectors, so the cost to own and operate an UST was increased. When you renew your Master Business License through the Department of Licensing, you will notice that the fee has increased an additional \$20 per tank compared to last year.

State law allows Ecology to change the UST rule (Chapter 173-360 WAC) after an opportunity for public review and comment. The UST rules (also known as regulations) provide the details for carrying out the state law. Ecology has been working on potential changes to the UST rule. Those changes include adding new requirements, eliminating others, and working to make them easier to read and understand. We anticipate issuing a draft UST rule for public review and comment in early 2010.

What changes in state rules were required?

- Develop and implement UST operator training program.
- Develop and implement a delivery prohibition or “red tag” program for out-of-compliance USTs.
- Require secondary containment for all new or replacement tanks, piping, and dispensers that are installed. This does not apply to existing UST systems.

Until state rules are changed, the existing UST rules remain in effect. The state UST rules were first written in 1990; minor changes were made in 1998. After almost 20 years, the rules need to be updated.

Whom should I contact if I have questions?

If you have questions about your UST system, please contact the appropriate Ecology regional office (see the list and map on the following pages). If you have questions about the state UST law, or the upcoming changes to the state UST rules, contact Mike Blum at 360-407-6913.

UST facilities

Ecology maintains a searchable database of various facilities in Washington. The database includes operational UST facilities, Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) sites, and other cleanup site information. You can access the Integrated Site Information System by typing this address into your web browser: <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/tcpwebreporting/reports.aspx>

The web page provides help (in writing and in a video) on how to create custom reports. Look at the tank and piping information and check if your site is on Ecology's list of LUST sites. You can see whether the cleanup status is correct, what cleanup sites are near your facility, and other information. If you find errors in the information, please contact your Ecology inspector. (See attached Ecology contact list).

What about your spill buckets and containment sumps?



Have you checked your containment sumps (pictured) and spill buckets lately? They should be clean and dry.

Is your spill bucket intact and liquid tight? Spill buckets are one of the major causes of releases, not just because of overfills from transporters, but because the buckets themselves may not be liquid tight. They may be corroded, cracked, split and otherwise deteriorated. Spill buckets made from high-density polyethylene can degrade from exposure to petroleum. Spill buckets were not made to last the life of the tank system and may only last for seven years before needing to be replaced.

Ecology Underground Storage Tank Contacts

Ecology Regional Office and Counties	Ecology UST Inspector	Phone number and E-mail address
Eastern Regional Office		
Adams, Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Walla Walla and Whitman	Jason Cocks or Roque Nalley for any of the counties	509-329-3405 jcoc461@ecy.wa.gov 509-329-3592 rnal461@ecy.wa.gov
Central Regional Office		
Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Kittitas, Klickitat, Okanogan and Yakima	Christina Zerby or Ben Maillet for any of the counties	509-454-7833 czer461@ecy.wa.gov 509-454-7834 bmai461@ecy.wa.gov
Northwest Regional Office		
King, Kitsap, Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish and Whatcom	Contact the receptionist at the Northwest Region for the appropriate UST inspector. (Annette Ademasu, Arthur Buchan, Kimberly Medicus, Luis Buen Abad, Brenda Yager or Chris Zouboulakis)	425-649-7000 -Receptionist Annette – 425-649-7189 aade461@ecy.wa.gov Arthur – 425-649-7149 abuc461@ecy.wa.gov Kimberly - 425-649-7191 kmed@ecy.wa.gov Luis - 425-649-7226 laba461@ecy.wa.gov Brenda - 425-649-7234 byag461@ecy.wa.gov Chris - 425-649-7008 czou461@ecy.wa.gov
Southwest Regional Office		
Jefferson and Thurston	Brett Manning	360-407-6268 bman461@ecy.wa.gov
Pierce (all cities except Tacoma)	Lisa Shriver	360-407-6332 lshr461@ecy.wa.gov
City of Tacoma and Clallam	Robin Munroe	360-407-7080 rmun461@ecy.wa.gov
Grays Harbor, Lewis, Mason, Pacific and Wahkiakum	Dean Phillips	360-407-6969 dphi461@ecy.wa.gov
Clark, Cowlitz and Skamania	Kristopher Grinnell	360-407-7264 krgr461@ecy.wa.gov
Headquarters Office		
All Western Washington Military/Federal Sites	Cathy Frey	360-407-7270 catf461@ecy.wa.gov

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For more information, check out these Department of Ecology web addresses:
www.ecy.wa.gov - the Department of Ecology home page
www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/ust-lust/tanks.html - the Ecology UST web address