



Oil transfer requirements for deliverers

Spills Prevention, Preparedness & Response

Washington's oil transfer requirements

The Washington State Department of Ecology's oil transfer rules are designed to prevent spills when oil is transferred over water. In 2004, state lawmakers instructed Ecology to adopt a "zero spills" goal. These transfer rules help achieve that goal. The rule citations are Chapter [173-180 WAC](#) for facilities, and Chapters [173-184](#) and [317-40 WAC](#) for vessels.

Do these rules apply to me?

All Class 1, 2, 3, and 4 facilities delivering oil in bulk to non-recreational vessels must meet state facility oil transfer requirements in [Chapter 173-180 WAC](#). These rules do not apply to fueling stations or marinas that transfer oil exclusively to recreational vessels.

All vessels delivering oil in bulk to a non-recreational vessel or facility must meet state vessel oil transfer requirements in [Chapter 173-184 WAC](#). If providing bunkers or fuels to covered vessels, they must also meet the requirements in [Chapter 317-40 WAC](#). Covered vessels are defined in [Revised Code of Washington \(RCW\) 88.46.010](#).

Advance Notice of Transfer

Delivering vessels and delivering Class 1, 2, and 3 facilities are required to submit Advance Notice of Transfer (ANT) notices. This submission satisfies both the state and federal requirements for advance notice of transfer in Washington State.

Vessels and facilities delivering over 100 gallons to a non-recreational vessel or facility must submit an ANT to Ecology at least 24 hours prior to the transfer, or as soon as possible. Advance notice information must be updated if the start time of the oil transfer changes from the original reported time by more than six hours.

Designating the Person-In-Charge (PIC)

All Class 1, 2, and 3 facilities and vessels transferring oil in bulk on or over state waters must designate a "person in charge" (PIC) who is responsible for supervising the oil transfer. They must be sufficiently trained to ensure a safe transfer.

Communication between PICs

Delivering and receiving PICs must ensure continuous, two-way voice communication during the transfer. The facility PIC must ensure two portable and intrinsically safe communication devices are available during the transfer. An air horn must be available for emergency shutdown signals. All personnel involved in the oil transfer must know and use English phrases and hand signals indicating STOP, HOLD, WAIT, FAST, SLOW, and FINISH.

Pre-transfer conference

A face-to-face conference between the receiving and delivering PICs must occur prior to the oil transfer. The PICs may conduct the pre-transfer conference via radio if weather conditions make moving from vessel to facility or vessel to vessel unsafe.

The PICs must be able to communicate in English during this pre-transfer conference. The PICs must discuss and approve:

- The pre-loading transfer plan.
- The Declaration of Inspection (DOI).
- The procedures for communicating soundings, changing over tanks, topping off, shift changes, and emergency shutdown.
- Possible impacts of predicted weather and/or sea conditions.
- For transfers to covered vessels, the conference will also identify the point-of-transfer watch and deck-rover watch on the receiving vessel.

Pre-loading or cargo transfer plan

A pre-load or cargo transfer plan must be completed prior to the pre-transfer conference. It must include:

- Identification, location, and capacity of the vessel's tanks receiving oil.
- Level and type of liquid in all bunker or cargo oil tanks prior to the oil transfer.
- Planned final innage or ullage — liquid level depth or the height of free space above the oil level, respectively.
- Planned final percent of full of each tank after filling.
- Sequence in which the tanks will be filled.
- Procedures for regularly monitoring all tank levels and valve alignments during the transfer operation.

Safe transfer operational requirements

All oil transfer operations at Class 1 and 2 facilities must be conducted according to the facility's Ecology-approved operations manual. All persons involved in the transfer must have the means to contain and recover drips or leaks from connections within the oil transfer system. Deliverers providing oil to vessels without fixed containment must provide adequate portable containment for each tank vent on the vessel. Before the transfer starts, the PICs must verify that:

- The DOI is signed by both PICs.
- The available capacity in the receiving tank(s) is (are) greater than the volume of oil to be transferred.
- All valves are properly aligned.
- An emergency shutdown capability is in place and operable.

Once the transfer starts, the PICs must ensure the tanks designated in the pre-transfer plan are receiving oil at the planned rate. If a shift change occurs, the relieving PIC must notify the person in charge at the other end of the transfer and must verify and sign the DOI.

Work hours

Delivering facility personnel with oil transfer duties may NOT work more than 16 hours in any 24-hour period, or

more than 40 hours in any 72-hour period. Receiving and delivering vessel personnel involved in bunkering may NOT work more than 15 hours in any 24-hour period, or more than 36 hours in any 72-hour period, per [WAC 317-40-085](#).

Oil transfer equipment requirements

Oil transfer hoses and piping used by Class 1, 2, 3, and 4 facilities and/or piping used in oil transfer operations must meet the following criteria:

- Must be well supported to avoid crushing or excessive strain.
- Flanges, joints, hoses, and piping must be visually checked for cracks and leakage prior to transferring oil.
- Must be in good condition and not have any loose covers, cracks, kinks, bulges, soft spots, or other defects that penetrate the hose reinforcement layer.
- Hoses or piping must not be permitted to chafe on the dock or vessel, or be in contact with any other surface that might damage the hoses or piping.
- All hoses and loading arms must be long enough to allow the vessel to move to the limits of its moorings without placing excessive strain on the oil transfer equipment.
- Hose ends must be tightly closed with properly secured flanges when they are moved into position for connection. They must be tightly closed immediately after they are disconnected.
- Residue in the hose or loading arm must be drained either into the vessel's tanks or into suitable shore receptacles before they are moved away from the point of connection.

Oil transfer equipment testing

Annual tests of all oil transfer equipment, such as pumps, valves, piping, manifolds, connections, and hoses, are required. These tests must be done in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations and industrial standards, or through procedures identified under federal regulations.



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To request an ADA accommodation, contact Ecology by phone at 360-464-0324 or email at jasmin.adams@ecy.wa.gov, or visit <https://ecology.wa.gov/accessibility>. For Relay Service or TTY call 711 or 877-833-6341