

CLASS A/B OPERATORS

Underground storage tank (UST) systems can be sources of leaks and spills, which put the environment and public health at risk from petroleum discharges. A recurring complaint of regulators across the United States has been that UST operators do not understand their storage systems, especially the leak detection equipment. An UST system that is operated and maintained by a knowledgeable person is less likely to have petroleum releases or spills to the environment. A knowledgeable person is more likely to identify and respond appropriately to any leaks or spills that may occur.

To address the need for informed UST operators, the 2005 Federal Underground Storage Tank Compliance Act requires all regulated UST facilities to have properly trained operators by August 8, 2012.

The Federal Underground Storage Tank Compliance Act established three categories of UST operators—Class A, B, and C.

Class A Operator – responsible for the overall UST facility, and may manage employees who are responsible for operating and maintaining the facility. This operator ensures that employees are properly trained to understand leak detection and spill-prevention equipment, ensure product compatibility with equipment, and maintain appropriate records.

Class B Operator – responsible for operation, maintenance, and record keeping at the UST facility on a day-to-day basis. This operator must be familiar with leak detection and spill-prevention systems, spill reporting and response, and record-keeping requirements.

Class C Operator – must be trained to know what actions to take in response to a leak alarm or an emergency, such as a spill at the facility.

Maine has combined the responsibilities of the Class A and Class B operators into a single category called Class A/B. Each facility in Maine must have a minimum of one trained Class A/B operator and one Class C operator. Class A/B operators in Maine may also serve as the Class C operator provided they meet the Class C requirements (see *TankSmart* Training Class “C” Operators module). The online and print versions of *TankSmart* were developed to provide the information needed to be a Class A/B UST operator in Maine.

An UST system that is operated and maintained by a knowledgeable person is less likely to have petroleum releases or spills to the environment.

CLASS A/B TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Once you feel you are ready, go online to take the test.

Anyone who wishes to serve as a Class A/B operator must pass Maine DEP's UST Operator Examination. The exam questions are based solely on information contained in the *TankSmart* materials. You may take the exam and obtain certification for a specific facility, or for all the facilities for which you are responsible. Anyone can take the training, even if you do not need certification as an UST operator. You can view the training information for as many or as few topics as you wish; however, it is important that you review at least the *TankSmart* topics applicable to your facility or facilities.

Once you feel you are ready, go to www.maine.gov/dep/rwm/ust/tanksmartonlineservice.htm to register and take the test. If you do not have Internet access, you may be able to access the Internet and take the test at a local library. If you are having problems accessing the online exam, call the Underground Tanks Unit at 207-287-2651.

The online test must be completed within two hours of starting. **You must score at least 80% on the exam to obtain certification.** After passing the exam you will be able to print a certificate to show that you are an official Class A/B UST operator in Maine. **Your *TankSmart* Class A/B certification must be renewed annually, which means you must retake the exam each year.**



Once you have obtained your operator certification, you are expected to operate your UST system responsibly and in accordance with Maine Rules.

WHAT MUST YOU DO ONCE YOU ARE CERTIFIED?

Once you have obtained your operator certification, you are expected to operate your UST system responsibly and in accordance with Maine Rules. As a Class A/B operator you are responsible for providing training to your Class C operators (see the *TankSmart* Training Class C Operators module). You must keep certificates for each Class A/B operator and documentation of Class C operator training at your facility (preferably in one notebook). UST operator training

documentation must be presented to inspectors during the annual inspection (see the *TankSmart* Annual Inspection module) and during random compliance inspections by DEP staff. Failure to demonstrate that your facility has certified Class A/B operators and trained Class C operators is a violation of Maine Rules.

WHAT OTHER RESOURCES SHOULD CLASS A/B OPERATORS KNOW ABOUT?

In addition to knowledge about your UST system equipment, operation, and maintenance, Class A/B operators should also be aware of the following:

- ▶ **Maine State Law Governing USTs** Available online at:
www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/38/title38ch3sec0.html
(See Subchapters 2-A, beginning at Section 541, and 2-B, beginning at Section 561.)
- ▶ **DEP Rules for Underground Oil Storage Facilities** (Chapter 691)
Available online at: www.maine.gov/sos/cec/rules/06/chaps06.htm
- ▶ **DEP Rules for Operator Training** (Chapter 693)
Available online at: www.maine.gov/dep/rwm/ust/statutesrules.htm
- ▶ **DEP forms, policies, and other information about USTs**
Available online at: www.maine.gov/dep/rwm/ust/index.htm
- ▶ **Maine Groundwater Oil Cleanup Fund** If you have a spill or leak at an underground oil storage facility, your cleanup costs may be covered by the Fund. (See Title 38 M.R.S.A. §568-A, §569-A and §569-B).
Go to: www.maine.gov/dep/rwm/groundwater/gwoilclean.htm
- ▶ **The Maine Board of Underground Storage Tank Installers (BUSTI)**
 - Tests and certifies Maine Certified Tank Installers and Inspectors (CTIs).
 - Approves continuing education credits for CTIs
 - Reviews complaints from customers and DEP staff against CTIs
 - May penalize, suspend, or revoke certification of CTIs that violate DEP rules, equipment manufacturer instructions, and the BUSTI Code of EthicsGo to: www.maine.gov/dep/rwm/ust/board.htm

For a list of certified tank inspectors and installers go to:
www.maine.gov/dep/rwm/ust/formslists.htm

- ▶ **Types of enforcement actions** (Notice of Violation (NOV), Administrative Consent Agreement (ACA), Delivery Prohibition, Cleanup Order). Definitions of these enforcement actions are in the Glossary of Terms. (Go to: www.maine.gov/dep/rwm/ust/additionalinfo.htm and click on Glossary of Terms.)

Maine DEP staff can assist you.

Call: 207-287-2651