



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

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This packet summarizes requirements in underground storage tank (UST) regulations (Chapter 173-360A WAC) for permanent closure of regulated USTs, and has the required forms to complete the process. **These requirements do not apply to tanks that are exempt from these regulations.**

**Summary of Permanent Closure Requirements:**

- At least 30 days prior to beginning permanent closure activities, the Department of Ecology (Ecology) [30-Day Notice for Underground Storage Tanks](#) form must be submitted to Ecology.
- Decommissioning and site assessment activities must be performed by International Code Council (ICC)-certified UST service providers.
- Within 30 days of completing permanent closure activities, submit a [Permanent Closure Notice for Underground Storage Tanks](#), signed by the ICC-certified UST Decommissioner.
- If no contamination is confirmed during permanent closure activities, submit the following documents to Ecology within 30 days of completing permanent closure activities:
  - [Site Check/Site Assessment Checklist](#) signed by the ICC-certified UST Site Assessor.
  - Site Assessment report completed by the Site Assessor.
- If contamination is confirmed during permanent closure activities, submit the following documents to Ecology within 90 days of completing permanent closure activities:
  - [Site Check/Site Assessment Checklist](#) signed by the ICC-certified UST Site Assessor.
  - Site characterization report completed by the Site Assessor.

**Permanent Closure: Ecology must be notified 30 days in advance.**

At least 30 days prior to beginning permanent closure activities, a 30-Day Notice must be submitted to Ecology. This form, which includes service provider and owner information, provides the UST inspector advance notice so that he or she may visit the project site while decommissioning work is being conducted. If the date of closure is unknown when the 30-Day Notice is submitted, contact the Ecology inspector at least three business days prior to the project start date. **It is your responsibility to contact other local authorities, including the fire marshal, for any additional policies and/or permits.**

During the 30-day notice period, the contents may be pumped from the tank, and recycled or disposed of as dangerous wastes.

### **ICC-certified service providers must be used.**

Service providers performing permanent closure activities must carry proof they are certified by the International Code Council as an UST Decommissioner and Site Assessor.

Conducting tank closures is dangerous work and should **not** be completed by unqualified or inexperienced persons. Failure to follow proper procedures may result in fire, explosion, and other hazards to human health or the environment.

### **Permanent closure procedures.**

Permanent closure includes “removal”, “closure-in-place”, or “change-in-service” (i.e. changing the product stored in a tank from a regulated substance to an unregulated substance). These projects may begin 30 days after Ecology date stamps the 30-Day Notice, and must be completed within 90 days after this date.

To begin the process, the ICC-certified Decommissioner will empty and clean tanks of all liquid and accumulated sludge. The tank must be properly inerted of flammable vapors, as directed by the International Fire Code. The Decommissioner must ensure the tank atmosphere and excavation area is regularly monitored for flammable or vapor concentrations until the tank is removed from both the excavation and the site. Piping, except any vent lines, shall be drained of product and be either capped or removed from the ground.

Tanks may then either be removed from the ground or filled with a solid inert material, such as CDF, a controlled density fill. Although the UST regulations allow for tanks to be closed in place, Ecology strongly recommends tanks be removed for the following reasons:

- it allows for the soil conditions to be observed,
- it is easier to collect soil samples needed for the site assessment (described below), and
- it may make any future property transactions less complicated, as potential buyers may not want to buy a property with a buried tank on it.

If a tank will be closed-in-place, first check with the local jurisdiction and fire marshal to ensure they will allow tanks to be closed using this method.

Once a tank is removed or filled with an inert material, the UST Decommissioner is required to fill out a Permanent Closure Notice that must also be signed by the owner or operator. This notice shall be submitted to Ecology within 30 days after tank closure activities are completed. If the site has a facility compliance tag, the tag must also be returned to Ecology at this time.

### **All permanent closures require a site assessment be conducted.**

A site assessment is an investigation to determine if the UST system released regulated product into the soil or groundwater. It must be performed in accordance with Ecology’s *Guidance for Site Checks and Site Assessments for USTs* and completed by an ICC-certified Site Assessor, a Washington-registered Professional Engineer (P.E.) or Washington Certified Hydrogeologist who is competent, by means of examination, experience, or education, to perform site assessments. The guidance provides information on sampling procedures, the number and locations of samples to be obtained, required laboratory analyses, and reporting requirements.

A Site Check/Site Assessment Checklist must be completed by the Site Assessor and submitted to Ecology within thirty (30) days of completion of the site assessment. A site assessment report must be submitted to Ecology within 30 days after tank closure if no confirmed contamination is discovered. If the UST system has caused a release to the environment, then, instead, a site characterization report shall be submitted within 90 days of tank closure.

**Releases discovered during tank closure must be reported to Ecology.**

When contaminated soil, groundwater, or free liquid- or vapor-phase petroleum products are discovered during tank removal, site assessment, or by any other means, the owner/operator is responsible for reporting this information to Ecology within twenty-four (24) hours of discovery. The Decommissioner or Site Assessor must report confirmed releases to the owner/operator immediately and to Ecology within 72 hours after discovering the condition.

Soil contaminated by petroleum and/or hazardous substances must be remediated under the Model Toxics Control Act, which describes the process for cleaning up contaminated sites. Contaminated soil must be disposed of at a permitted facility that accepts dangerous waste. If it is to be “landfarmed” on or offsite, be sure your local jurisdiction allows this and that you understand all the requirements for this remediation method.

**Record Keeping.**

The site assessment results must be submitted to Ecology and maintained by the owner for at least five years after completion of tank permanent closure. However, Ecology recommends records be maintained indefinitely by the owner. Proof of a “clean closure” is very important regarding any future property transfers or related business transactions, such as obtaining loans or insurance.

*Further questions or reporting a release? Please contact your regional office below.*

<b>Regional Office</b>	<b>Counties Served</b>
Central (509) 575-2490	Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Kittitas, Klickitat, Okanogan, Yakima
Eastern (509) 329-3400	Adams, Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Walla Walla, Whitman
Headquarters (360) 407-7170	Federal facilities in Western Washington
Northwest (425) 649-7000	Island, King, Kitsap, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, Whatcom
Southwest (360) 407-6300	Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, Pierce, Skamania, Thurston, Wahkiakum

***Find a complete list of UST inspectors at:***

<https://ecology.wa.gov/Spills-Cleanup/Contamination-cleanup/Underground-storage-tanks/UST-contact-list>

*Accommodation Requests: To request ADA accommodation including materials in a format for the visually impaired, call Ecology at 360-407-7170 or visit <https://ecology.wa.gov/accessibility>. People with impaired hearing may call Washington Relay Service at 711. People with speech disability may call TTY at 877-833-6341.*