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# UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK OPERATOR TRAINING REQUIREMENTS



N.C. Department of Environmental Quality

Division of Waste Management

UST Section

## Operator Training

The Federal Energy Policy Act enacted by Congress in 2005 mandated training for all UST system operators. In North Carolina, there are two types of UST operators who must receive training:

- ✓ **Primary Operator (Class A/B)**
- ✓ **Emergency Response Operator (Class C)**

## Primary Operator

Each UST owner must designate at least one (but may designate more than one) Primary Operator for each UST facility. A Primary Operator must meet the following criteria:

- ✓ Responsible for day-to-day aspects of operation, maintenance, and record-keeping for the UST system
- ✓ General knowledge of UST compliance requirements
- ✓ Not a third-party contractor
- ✓ An employee of the UST owner or the entity operating the facility's USTs

## Operator Training Topics

The training for the Primary Operator covers the following topics:

- ✓ Spill prevention
- ✓ Overfill control
- ✓ Compatibility
- ✓ Leak detection
- ✓ Corrosion protection
- ✓ Financial responsibility
- ✓ Suspected releases
- ✓ UST system components
- ✓ Emergency Response Operator training requirements
- ✓ UST reporting and recordkeeping requirements

## Primary Operator Training at the UST Facility

- ☑ The owner should ensure that the intended Primary Operator is present at the facility for a scheduled compliance inspection. The Primary Operator will be trained during the compliance inspection if the facility is in compliance at the time of inspection.
- ☑ The Primary Operator is given the Operator Regulatory Knowledge Assessment (ORKA). This is a test that the Primary Operator must complete during a compliance inspection. If the operator scores 75% or better on the ORKA, and the facility is in compliance, then the Primary Operator will receive a "Trained Operator Certificate".

- ✘ If the facility is not in compliance at the inspection and/or the Primary Operator does not achieve a passing score on the ORKA, then a Notice of Violation will be sent to the UST owner with instructions for the Primary Operator to enroll in Tank School or take the online training course.

## Tank School

Tank School is a free, day-long class with an exam that retrain Primary Operators in accordance with the US EPA requirements for operating and maintaining UST systems. The class is held regularly in Raleigh, NC.

- ✔ If a Primary Operator achieves a score of 75% or better on the assessment given at Tank School, then the Primary Operator will receive a “Trained Operator Certificate”.

## Post-Training Requirements

Operator retraining is required when:

- ✔ A new Primary Operator is appointed for that facility
- ✔ The facility is out of compliance at the next compliance inspection

Within 30 days of either case above, the Primary Operator is required to register for Tank School or an online training course and complete the course within 90 days.

## Emergency Response Operator

Each UST owner must also designate at least one (but may designate more than one) Emergency Response Operator for each UST facility. The Emergency Response Operator is defined by the following criteria:

- ✔ Controls or monitors fuel sales or dispensing operations
- ✔ Provides immediate response to alarms and releases
- ✔ Present at the facility during fuel dispensing operations

## Emergency Response Operator Training

Primary Operators are ultimately responsible for training Emergency Response Operators. Training for the Emergency Response Operator includes: actions required to respond to emergencies and alarms indicating spills or releases from the UST system(s). The Emergency Response Operator should be trained before assuming responsibility for monitoring or controlling fuel dispensing. Once trained, no training renewals are required.

Emergency Response Operator Training Methods	
<b>Primary Operator</b>	<p>Primary Operators should conduct the training using the Emergency Response operator training packet available on the UST Section website at <a href="http://tankschool.nc.gov">http://tankschool.nc.gov</a></p> <p>The packet includes instructions and materials, as well as a UST-26 form to document that training was completed. The UST-26 form must be kept at the UST facility.</p>
<b>Online Training</b>	<p>Accepted if the Primary Operator has verified that the online tool includes all the training requirements that the UST Section-issued Emergency Response Operator training packet covers. The UST-26 form, or similar documentation, must be kept at the UST facility to verify that training was completed.</p>
<b>Store Manager</b>	<p>Primary Operators can train a store manager as an Emergency Response Operator, who can then conduct Emergency Response Operator training for other employees and sign the UST-26 form under the oversight of the Primary Operator. The Primary Operator should identify the store manager authorized to provide the training in writing and attach it to the UST-26 form.</p>

## Unmanned Facilities

Unmanned Facility Options	
<b>Daily Site Visit</b>	<p>Requires a trained Emergency Response Operator to check leak detection consoles for power, alarms, and warnings as well as visually inspect all aboveground equipment for signs of leaks, spills, and/or erratic operation.</p>
<b>Automated Notification System</b>	<p>Must immediately alert Emergency Response Operator of alarms for tanks, piping, and overfills at any time.</p>

Highly visible placards must be placed in the dispensing area to indicate where the automatic-shutoff is located and to instruct individuals to call 911 in the event of an emergency.

## Questions?

If you have any questions, please contact the UST Section Central Office at (919) 707-8171 or visit our website at <https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/waste-management/ust>