



Training for Underground Storage Tank Operators

A guide for owners and operators of USTs

This is a general guide to laws and regulations for underground storage tanks and an aid in minimizing potential risks; it does not replace those laws and regulations, which take precedence over any information in this publication. If your UST system is located in Kinney, Uvalde, Medina, Bexar, Comal, Hays, Travis, or Williamson County, additional requirements related to the protection of the Edwards or the Trinity Aquifer may apply (Title 30, Texas Administrative Code [30 TAC], Chapters 213 and 214). In addition to the laws and TCEQ rules, local governments and other state and federal agencies may have rules that apply. The owner and operator are responsible for ensuring compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

Who must be trained?

As required by federal legislation, the TCEQ has adopted regulations requiring owners and operators of UST systems to be trained in performing compliance functions at their facilities. Owners and operators of regulated UST systems must comply with the operator-training requirements listed in 30 TAC 334.601–06.

Effective August 8, 2012 each facility must have at least one named individual certified for each class of operator—classes A, B, and C. One person may hold more than one operator classification. During hours of operation, at least one certified operator must be present at the facility at all times.

Operator training is not the same as Stage II facility-representative training. Operator training is required for all UST facilities statewide under 30 TAC 334.601–06. Stage II facility-representative training is required for all Stage II facilities in the nonattainment counties under 30 TAC 115. 248. If you are in a Stage II nonattainment county (see Module 475j), you are required to have both the operator training and the Stage II facility-representative training.

What are the three classes of operators, and how do they differ?

A **Class A operator** has the primary responsibility of ensuring the proper operation and maintenance of a UST system. Class A operators must also know the regulations that apply to UST systems, including an understanding of:

- registration
- system components
- product compatibility
- spill and overflow prevention
- corrosion protection
- release detection
- record keeping
- notification
- release reporting and response
- temporary and permanent closure
- operator training
- financial responsibility

This role is typically filled by the facility owner.

A **Class B operator** has the primary responsibility of implementing all applicable requirements of these regulations in the field, implementing day-to-day aspects of the operation and maintenance of the UST system. These responsibilities include a detailed knowledge of all the components listed above for a Class A operator. Also, the designated Class B operator for a facility must ensure that all Class C operators at that facility receive the required training.

This role is typically filled by the facility manager.

A **Class C operator** of a UST system must be trained in both general and facility-specific emergency-response procedures. This knowledge must include an understanding of:

- the operation of the emergency shutoff equipment;
- the initial response procedures following system alarm warnings;
- the first-response actions to releases, spills, or overfills; and
- how to notify emergency responders and the designated Class A and Class B operators of the UST system.

Class A and Class B operators are responsible for maintaining the emergency procedures on-site for easy access by Class C operators.

This role is typically filled by the facility clerks.

What type of training is required?

Class A and B operators must complete a TCEQ-approved operator training course or process, which **may** include classroom or online training performed by, contracted for, or approved by the TCEQ, and **must** include an evaluation of operator knowledge through testing, practical demonstration, or other tools the TCEQ accepts. The approved training providers must verify the training via a

written or electronic certificate stating the classification and date. Every certificate must be maintained at the UST facility, and a copy submitted to the TCEQ at annual self-certification.

Class C operator-training programs must meet the minimum requirements of the TCEQ rule. Their format can be in-class, hands-on, online or any other deemed acceptable by the Class B operator. A Class B operator must give the owner or operator of the UST facility a document—after signing, dating, and verifying it—that lists all trained Class C operators for the facility. The list must include the dates of their training and must be kept current with any personnel changes.

When is the training deadline and how often must operators take courses?

Aug. 8, 2012, is the deadline for UST systems to have designated and trained Class A, Class B, and Class C operators. Class A and Class B operators designated after Aug. 8, 2012 must have passed an acceptable operator-training course before assuming operation and maintenance responsibilities for the UST system. Class C operators designated after Aug. 8, 2012, must have passed an acceptable operator-training course before assuming unsupervised responsibilities for responding to emergencies at the facility.

All Class A, Class B, and Class C operators must be retrained within three years of their last training date. Class C operator training is only applicable at the specific facility for which the training was provided.

Training deadlines

Class A	Every 3 years	TCEQ-approved training
Class B	Every 3 years*	TCEQ-approved training
Class C	Every 3 years	Training approved or given by Class B operator

*If the owner or operator of a UST facility receives a notice of violation and the TCEQ determines that the facility is in significant noncompliance, the Class B operator must retake the TCEQ-approved compliance class that addresses the noted noncompliance areas within a time frame the agency sets. Significant noncompliance includes the failure to provide release detection, spill and overfill prevention, corrosion protection, or financial assurance.

How can I find the required training courses?

To find an approved training provider, please see the list linked from *Petroleum Storage Tank* at <www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/ust-training>.

What records do I need to keep?

Owners and operators of UST facilities must maintain required operator-training certificates on-site. Documentation may be maintained off-site electronically, if the facility can produce a clear printed copy to the TCEQ within 72 hours of an investigation.

Where can I find more information?

For confidential, environmental compliance assistance for small businesses and local governments, contact Small Business and Local Government Assistance via its hotline at 800-447-2827 or online at <www.TexasEnviroHelp.org>.

For more information about the new UST operator-training rules, you may also contact the TCEQ's Remediation Division—PST Section at 512-239-2200, or e-mail <psttech@tceq.texas.gov>.