

COMPLIANCE ASSISTANCE BULLETIN

News You Can Use

UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANKS PROPER SUMP SENSOR PLACEMENT

Purpose

The purpose of this Bulletin is to remind owners and operators of underground storage tanks (UST) that they must implement a monitoring program which is capable of detecting an unauthorized leak or release from any portion of the UST system (California Code of Regulations, Title 23, Chapter 16, Section 2641(a)).

Issue

Recent inspections by the Sacramento County Environmental Management Department (EMD) has revealed increased numbers of violations involving the intentional disabling, tampering or raising of the liquid sump sensor. Other actions that have resulted in the disabling of automatic leak detection devices or alarms have also been discovered.

What This Means To You

Owners or operators of USTs will be held responsible for any actions of employees or contract workers that result in raised liquid sensor(s) or any other disabling of the leak detection alarm system. Liquid sensors located in the sumps of UST piping systems for leak detection must be positioned at the bottom of the sump. This placement is crucial to detect liquid that may leak into the sump via a return flow from attached piping. Raising the sensor to a position above the lowest point in the sump will be considered as tampering.

Failure To Comply

California Health and Safety Code, Chapter 6.7, Section 25299(f)(2) states that any person who intentionally disables or tampers with an automatic leak detection system in a manner that would prevent the system from detecting a leak or alerting the owner or operator of the leak, shall, upon conviction, be punished by a fine of not less than \$5,000 or more than \$10,000 or by imprisonment in the county jail for not more than one year, or by both the fine and imprisonment. The Sacramento County EMD has taken administrative enforcement action against businesses and facilities where sensor tampering has been discovered.

Suggestions To Assist You In Meeting Requirements

We urge all owners or operators of UST systems to periodically inspect tank sump areas and ensure that sensors are placed in the proper position.

If you are not able to determine if you are in compliance, contact tank testing, your contractor, or this Department.

**For More
Information or
Assistance**

If you need additional information or have questions concerning this Bulletin, contact (916) 875-8550.

Disclaimer

The information contained in this Compliance Assistance Bulletin is based upon the statutes and regulations and is intended to provide a basic overview to help achieve compliance. This document does not replace or supersede relevant statutes and regulations and is not intended as legal advice. All interested parties should monitor changes to relevant statutes and regulations for updates.

October 2002