

# Emergency generator underground storage tanks

This fact sheet explains the requirements for underground storage tanks (USTs) used for fueling emergency generators.

## Which tanks are regulated?

Tanks larger than 110 gallons that are used to store fuel underground for an emergency generator are regulated by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) in order to prevent leaks and spills.

Emergency generator tanks are fully regulated tanks just like a retail fueling station. These requirements include but are not limited to:

- Ten-day pre-notification of installation, repair, or removal.
- Tank notification upon installation, removal and change in status.
- New installation requirements including double wall tanks and pipe with interstitial monitoring.
- Tank system compatibility.
- Class A/B/C operator certification.
- Tank release detection.
- Piping release detection.
- Cathodic protection.
- Spill and overfill protection.
- Monthly walk-through inspections.
- Annual release detection operability testing and inspections.
- Three-year functionality and integrity testing.
- Certified UST contractors must be employed for all installation, removals, and repairs of the system.

For a detailed description of these requirements and notification forms, please visit the UST website at:

<https://www.pca.state.mn.us/waste/underground-storage-tank-systems>.

Because emergency generator tanks contain a combustible fuel, they are also regulated under the Minnesota State Fire Code. For more information, contact your local fire department, or visit the State Fire Marshal website at: <https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/sfm/fire-code/Pages/state-fire-code.aspx>.

## What about tanks used for both heating and emergency generator use?

Some tanks that store heating oil used for onsite heating and are also hooked up to an emergency generator (dual use). These tanks are subject to the same requirements as emergency generator tanks with a few exceptions. Dual use tanks are exempt from the following requirements.

- Piping release detection is not required for suction piping systems.
- Monthly walkthrough inspections.
- Annual release detection operability testing inspections.
- Three-year functionality and integrity testing.

## **What is required when the tank is no longer used?**

If an emergency generator system is operational and is intended to be available for emergency use, the tank is considered active and the owner does not need to notify the MPCA or close the tank, even if the tank is not actually used for long periods of time. However, if the emergency generator system is taken out of service, the tank must be permanently closed within one year. A tank owner may request MPCA approval to maintain an out of service tank in temporary closure up to five years, so long as certain conditions are followed.

To permanently close an emergency generator tank, it may either be closed in place by being filled with grout or a foam that hardens up, or it may be removed from the ground. Contractors who permanently close a tank must be certified by the MPCA. A list of certified contractors is found on the UST Program website. At least ten days in advance of starting work, the contractor or owner must notify the MPCA of the tank closure project by email, using the “Ten-day Advance Notice” form.

The tank and piping must first be emptied and cleaned, and the contents disposed of properly. A removed tank must be disposed of properly. A site assessment (soil sampling) in the area of the tank is required. Within 30 days after closing the tank, the contractor or owner must notify the MPCA by email using the “UST Notification” form.

## **What if the property is sold?**

If property containing an emergency generator tank is sold, the seller must notify the buyer of the existence of the tanks. Notification must be in writing prior to closing the transaction. It is the buyer’s duty to notify the MPCA of the change in ownership.

## **Is there funding for cleanup?**

The Petrofund administered by the Department of Commerce provides up to 90 % reimbursement for costs related to cleanup of petroleum contamination from an emergency generator USTs are eligible for this funding. If you have questions, you can visit the Petrofund website at:  
<https://mn.gov/commerce/industries/fuel/petrofund/>

## **Need more information?**

Visit the UST Program at [www.pca.state.mn.us/cleanup/ust.html](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/cleanup/ust.html). The site has forms, fact sheets, and other information about USTs and UST requirements. You can also call the MPCA at 651-296-6300 or 1-800-657-3864 and ask for the UST Program.