

MISSISSIPPI'S UST CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. Why do I have to be certified to do work with underground storage tanks (USTs)?

A. State law requires that after July 1990, no person may install, alter, or remove (permanently close) a UST in Mississippi unless he or she has first been certified by the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ).

Q. Why was this law necessary?

A. Almost one-half of the leaks from USTs are caused by improper installation. Also, new standards have been instituted for UST systems.

Q. What are the qualifications to become certified?

A. You must (1) complete MDEQ approved education course work: 8 hours for closure certification, and if you want to be certified to install, alter and remove USTs, you must also have 8 hours for installation and/or alteration, (2) pass the MDEQ closure examination and if you want to install, alter and remove USTs pass the installation and alteration exam, (Your test score must be at least 75 percent.), and (3) you must provide proof that you are financially responsible. Financial responsibility may be demonstrated by:

1. Obtaining a Certificate of Responsibility from the Mississippi Board of Contractors.
2. Being in the full-time employ of a company that has a Certificate of Responsibility from the Mississippi Board of Contractors.
3. Having at least \$50,000 in contractor's general liability insurance that includes a 30- or 60-day cancellation notice and the Department of Environmental Quality as the certificate holder.
4. Being in the full-time employ of a company with at least \$50,000 in contractor's general liability insurance that includes a 30- or 60-day cancellation notice.

Q. I want to only remove tanks and close tanks in place. I do not want to install or alter UST systems. Do I still have to be certified?

A. Yes, You will have to be certified as a removal contractor. You must take and pass only the closure exam. You must complete 8 hours of MDEQ approved course work in closure. The certification that you receive will limit you to perform permanent closures only.

Q. I now work for a tank installer who does have the Certificate of Responsibility from the Mississippi Board of Contractors , or who has the required insurance. If I get certified to install, alter, and/or remove USTs, and then I go to work for someone else, is my certification still good?

A. Only if you complete a new application, if you have your new employer provide us with a letter stating that you are a full-time employee of the company, and if you provide us with proof of financial responsibility from the company that now employs you.

Q. I work for a petroleum marketer who owns lots of retail gas stations. We install, alter, and remove our own tanks. Do I have to be certified to work on our own tanks?

A. Yes, but you will not have to provide proof of financial responsibility.

Q. Does everybody on the job have to be certified?

A. No, there can be all kinds of helpers on a job, but they must be supervised by the person holding a certificate from MDEQ, and that certified individual must be on site during the "critical junctures" of an installation or alteration, and/or a permanent closure of a UST. Critical junctures are defined in the UST Regulations for the Certification of Persons Who Install, Alter, and Remove USTs. Remember it is the individual who is certified by MDEQ to work on USTs that is responsible for the proper installation, alteration, or removal of a UST. His certification will be in jeopardy if the work is not done properly.

Q. Who verifies on the notification form that the installation was done properly?

A. The certified installer is the one who attests to the proper installation. The owner of the UST(s) is responsible for completing the rest of the notification form and for filing it.

Q. Is there an insurance requirement for being certified to install, alter, or remove USTs?

A. An applicant must prove that he is financially responsible. He may do so in one of two ways: 1. Submit a certificate of insurance for contractor's general liability in the amount of at least \$50,000. This certificate must include the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality as the certificate holder and include a 30- or 60-day cancellation notice.
2. Submit a Certificate of Responsibility from the Mississippi Board of Contractors for his company.

Q. How do I or how does my employer obtain a Certificate of Responsibility from the Mississippi Board of Contractors?

A. Please contact that agency at (601) 354-6161 or write to them at 2001 Airport Road, Suite 101, Jackson, Mississippi 39208.

Q. Can I take the exam without meeting the other requirements?

A. Yes, but you will not receive a certificate until you have met all requirements. You will have six (6) months after taking the exam to furnish us with proof that you meet all requirements in order to be certified. Otherwise, you will have to take the exam again.

Q. If I meet all the other requirements but fail the exam? Can I take it again?

A. Yes. If you fail the exam, you must wait at least 30 days before retaking the exam. If you fail the exam three times during a one year period, you will have to wait a year from the last date that you took the exam before taking it again.

Q. How do I make application to be certified by MDEQ to install, alter, and/or remove USTs?

A. Complete and submit to MDEQ a MDEQ application for certification. Call (601) 961-5171 or write to MDEQ to obtain an application.

Q. Do I have to complete MDEQ approved UST course work before I can take the exam?

A. No. However, required course work is one of the certification requirements that must be completed before certification will be issued.

Q. What can I study before taking the exam?

A. For the UST closure exam, carefully study American Petroleum Institute (API) 1604 and MDEQ publications relating to permanent closure. For the installation and alteration exam, you will need to study Petroleum Equipment Institute (PEI) RP100-2000, API 1615, and API 1632. Also, you will need to study Mississippi laws and regulations on USTs. MDEQ can furnish you with copies of the law, the regulations, and MDEQ publications at your request. However all PEI and API publications must be ordered directly from each organization. Write or call:

API
1220 L Street, N.W.
Washington D. C. 20005-4070
(202) 682-8000
<http://www.api.org>

PEI
P O Box 2380
Tulsa, OK 74101-2380
(918) 494-9696 / Fax: (918) 491-9895
<http://www.pei.org>

Q. How long will the exams last?

A. It generally takes applicants from 30 minutes to an hour and a half to complete the UST closure exam. It generally takes applicants one and one-half hours to two hours to complete the UST installation and alteration exam.

Q. Where and when is the exam given?

A. The exam is given at the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, 101 Capitol Centre', 101 West Capitol Street, Jackson, Mississippi. The schedule to take the exam call (601) 961-5171.

Q. How often are the certificates renewed?

A. Every two years. Your certificate is good for two years beginning the first day of the month issued.

Q. What will I get if I meet all of the qualifications and pass the exam?

A. You will receive a letter-sized certificate and a wallet card to carry on your person.

Q. What do I have to do to have my certificate renewed?

A. Make application for renewal BEFORE your certification expires. Indicate on your application the required number of MDEQ approved continuing education course work that you have completed during the two years that you have been certified. (8 hours for closure and if you are also certified to install, alter, and remove USTs, you also need 8 hours for installation and alteration)

Q. Is there a charge for this certificate?

A. No.

Q. I am a registered, professional engineer, and I install new USTs. Do I have to be certified under this program?

A. Yes, all persons installing, altering, and/or removing regulated USTs in Mississippi must be certified by MDEQ. If you are just designing a system, you do not have to be certified.

Q. How do I get the continuing education hours required to renew my certification?

A. Attend MDEQ approved continuing education course work. You may request a listing of MDEQ approved courses by writing or calling MDEQ or by checking our web site at <http://www.deq.state.ms.us>

Q. I just work on dispensers, hydraulic lifts, air compressors, and other service station equipment. Do I have to be certified under this program?

A. No, only those individuals who work on USTs and piping have to be certified.

Q. I put in monitoring wells . Do I have to be certified?

A. No. Only those individuals who work on USTs and piping that routinely contain product need to be certified.

Q. If I only collect soil samples when removing or closing a UST in place, must I be certified?

A. A MDEQ certified remover must be on site when soil samples are collected during a UST removal or a closure in place.

Q. What if I install a regulated tank for someone after July 1, 1990, without first being certified?

A. You can be prosecuted for violating the law. More importantly, the person for whom you installed the UST will have to get someone that is certified to review the job and possibly do the job over.