

POLLUTION PREVENTION GRANT PROGRAM (aka “Pump and Plug Program”)

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

Grants are authorized under Section 711 of the Storage Tank and Spill Prevention Act, Act 32 of 1989 (as amended).

PURPOSE

Up to \$350,000 per year has been set aside for the Pollution Prevention Grant Program. Grants are issued to eligible tank owners of underground storage tanks to accomplish the following:

1) Pumping out and disposing of regulated product from the tank; 2) Cleaning the inside of the tank; and 3) Grouting the fill pipe if the tank will be temporarily removed from service. This pertains to underground storage tanks regulated pursuant to the Storage Tank and Spill Prevention Act which have not been upgraded to comply with technical requirements of federal and state regulations.

ELIGIBILITY

The following must be met in order to be eligible for a reimbursement grant:

- Tank owners must own six or fewer regulated underground storage tanks;
- Tanks must be underground tanks that have not been upgraded to comply with technical requirements of federal and state regulations;
- Storage tanks must be registered with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and all fees paid prior to closing the tanks – this includes Underground Storage Tank Indemnification Fund (USTIF) fees;
- A contractor, certified by DEP in the proper category, must be used for tank cleaning; and
- The work must have been done after July 1, 1998.

SCOPE

DEP will grant money for pumping and disposing of regulated substances from tanks until they are empty (contain less than one inch of product), cleaning the inside of tanks and, if tanks will be temporarily removed from service, grouting the fill pipes with a permanent material so that the tanks are rendered inoperable. Temporary removal from service is permitted for up to 12 months for non-upgraded tanks. It is the tank owner’s responsibility to permanently close tanks during this time period. Tank owners may determine that it is in their best interest to remove or permanently close tanks when pumping, disposal and cleaning is done. Costs beyond pumping, disposal, and cleaning will not be reimbursed under the grant program.

The reimbursement grant will not exceed \$2,500 per tank. Reimbursement is retroactive to July 1, 1998. Work that was done prior to this date is ineligible. DEP may withhold reimbursement until DEP registration fees, USTIF fees, fines, or violations are resolved, or for omission, falsification, or submission of inaccurate information.

HOW TO APPLY

Contact DEP’s Storage Tank Program at 1-800-42-TANKS (in PA only) or 717-772-5599 to request a grant application. Return the completed application and all requested information to:

Department of Environmental Protection
Bureau of Environmental Cleanup and Brownfields
Division of Storage Tanks
P.O. Box 8762
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8762

APPLICATION REVIEW

Applications will be processed on a first-come, first-serve basis. If the available funds are committed for the year, no more money will be granted until the next year. Those applications unfunded in the prior year will be given first consideration for money available in the next year. All applications will be reviewed as soon as possible upon receipt.

REIMBURSEMENT

Upon completion of the project, the applicant must submit the reimbursement application, along with the documentation that the storage tank's contents were disposed of at a DEP-permitted disposal/treatment facility, and a detailed account of all costs associated with the pumping, disposal, cleaning and, if applicable, grouting. Other required documentation includes a W-9 form and a completed Registration/Permitting of Storage Tanks form. Incomplete applications or applications that do not have all required documentation will be returned to the tank owner. Failure to submit required information will result in a delay of processing the reimbursement. Grant payment information will be reported to the IRS and may be subject to taxes.

REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

The following regulatory requirements for closure are not reimbursable under the Pollution Prevention Grant Program. Refer to DEP's Technical Guidance Document (No. 263-4500-601) on closure requirements for more information.

An underground storage tank system is considered to be temporarily out-of-service when the following requirements are met:

- The tank is empty when all materials have been removed using commonly employed practices so that no more than one inch of residue, or 0.3 percent by weight of the total capacity of the underground tank system, remains in the system;
- If the tank has corrosion protection, it must be maintained;
- If the tank is in temporary out-of-service status for three months or more, then all lines, pumps and ancillary equipment must be capped and secured following standard industry practices. Although this isn't required for three months after pumping the tank, DEP recommends this be done at the time of pumping, cleaning and grouting the tank because it reduces the risk of product seeping back into the tank after it has been pumped and cleaned;
- Vent lines must be left open and functioning;
- An amended Registration/Permitting form indicating the change in status of the tank(s) must be submitted to DEP;
- Registration must be kept current, documentation of insurance coverage must continue to be maintained, and all fees associated with such must still be paid as invoiced; and
- Temporary out-of-service status may not be more than 12 months for non-upgraded tanks.

DEP encourages permanent closure to be undertaken at the time the pumping, disposal, and cleaning activities occur.

To accomplish permanent closure, the following requirements must be met in addition to pumping and cleaning:

- Either close-in-place by filling the tank with a non-shrinking or solid inert substance (usually sand or concrete) or remove tank and piping;
- Close and cap all piping following standard industry practices;
- Complete a closure report; and
- Submit an amended Registration/Permitting form to DEP indicating the change in status of the tank(s).
- A site assessment is required.

PLEASE NOTE: Any excavation to access the tank or piping is considered to be a Tank Handling Activity and requires the services of a DEP-certified individual with certification in the applicable certification category.

CORRECTIVE ACTION

If a release is discovered, it must be reported to the appropriate DEP regional office. Corrective action must be taken immediately in accordance with the Corrective Action Process regulations in 25 Pa. Code, Chapter 245, Subchapter D. The Closure Report must be submitted to the appropriate DEP regional office within 180 days of reporting a release.

The tank owner is responsible for all costs associated with a release and cleanup.

For additional information on conducting cleanups, contact the appropriate DEP regional office.

For additional information on Pennsylvania's Storage Tank Program or to obtain forms, contact:

Central Office, Bureau of Environmental Cleanup and Brownfields, Division of Storage Tanks, P.O. Box 8762, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8762, 717-772-5599, 800-42-TANKS (in PA only)

For more information, visit www.dep.pa.gov, search term: Storage Tanks.