

Field-Based Research Questions and Answers

1. How do I benefit from this project testing?

- Your involvement in this project will provide you knowledge of whether your UST system is working as designed and help protect the groundwater from contamination.
- Early detection and repair of a leaking system will reduce not only the amount of damage done to the environment, but the cleanup-related expenses as well.
- If you have a UST system with single walled components within 1,000 feet of public water well, State law requires you to use "enhanced" leak detection methods to test your system. The Tracer Tight® method will satisfy the testing requirements without cost to you.

2. What does the testing method entail?

- When the tank testing team from Tracer Research Corporation arrives at your facility they will perform a limited facility check to determine the type of equipment present at the facility (i.e., type of tanks, piping, leak detection, etc.).
- Next, 25 to 35 soil vapor probes will be air or water jetted into the tank pit and piping trenches.
- Then, the tank will be inoculated with a tracer.
- Depending on the type of backfill at your facility, the testing team will return in 7 to 14 days to collect soil vapor samples from the probes.

3. How reliable are the testing methods?

- The Tracer Tight® tank and piping test methods are third party certified to detect a leak rate of 0.05 gph with a probability of detection of at least 95 percent and a probability of false alarm of 5 percent or less.
- These test methods have been reviewed and listed by the National Work Group on Leak Detection Evaluations and are approved for use in California.
- These tests are performed by or under the supervision of a California licensed tank tester.

4. Will my facility have to shut down during testing (including installation of probes and sampling)?

- Although one side of a pump island will have to be closed during the installation or sampling of probes at that island, the rest of the

- facility will be able to operate normally during both installation and sampling procedures.
- Each probe installation will require 5 to 20 minutes and sampling of each one will require about 2 minutes.

5. If I have a UST system with a single-walled component within 1,000 feet of a public drinking water well, will this testing satisfy the "enhanced" leak detection requirements?

- You may submit the results of the Tracer Tight® test to your local agency to satisfy the enhanced leak detection requirements.
- By November 1, 2000 the State Water Resources Control Board must notify all single walled component UST owners/operators if their UST systems are within 1,000 feet of a public drinking water well.
- Within 12 months the owner/operator is required to implement an "enhanced" testing program, approved by the local agency, for their UST systems.

6. In the unlikely event of damage to a UST system or utilities as a result of installation of the sampling probes, who is responsible for repairs?

- In the unlikely event that a UST system or utilities are damaged, Tracer Research Corporation will be responsible for the repairs. The danger of damage to UST systems and underground utilities has been virtually eliminated by the method of probe installation in which PVC pipes will be air or water jetted into place. This method of installation is not hazardous to the UST system or underground utilities. In fact, this approach is equivalent to the recommended method of exposing utilities to confirm their location.

7. Will the chemical tracer put in the tank alter or harm the quality of the gasoline in the tank?

- The chemicals used as tracers are inert, dissolve completely in the gasoline, and evaporate without a residue. They are added at trace levels and have no opportunity to impact the properties of the gasoline. Tracer labeled gasoline would be indistinguishable from unlabeled gasoline to any fuels quality test.
- When the gasoline is burned, the chemicals used as tracers are destroyed. No new combustion products are produced as the tracer chemical is burned that are not already present in the exhaust of all fuel burning vehicles.

8. What will happen if tracer is detected in the soil vapor sampling?

- If tracer is detected, one more round of testing will be done to confirm and pinpoint the location of the release or confirm that a proper repair was made. This will also be done at no cost to you.
- This process makes it possible to avoid excavation of the entire system to determine the source of the release.

9. In the event of tracer detection, who is responsible for repairs to and/or excavation of the UST system?

- The UST owner/operator is responsible for all repairs and/or excavation of the UST system except as a result of damage done to the UST system or utilities by probe installation.
- If the tracer detection is the result of an improper installation or a defective component, you should review the manufacturers installation guaranties and warranties obtained for the system to determine if you can recover your costs.

10. What will happen if a leak is discovered at the facility?

- The local agency or Regional Water Board will be involved in this process to answer questions and assist the facility owner.
- The facility owner is responsible for repairs and required by State law to report the discovery of a release to the local agency.
- Under the direction of the local agency, the facility owner will need to perform a site investigation to determine the extent and impact from the leak.

11. If cleanup is necessary, how will it be paid for?

- The State of California offers reimbursement of some of the costs associated with the cleanup of petroleum contaminated soil and groundwater caused by leaking USTs through the Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Fund (the Cleanup Fund).
- The Cleanup Fund is supported, in part, by the mil tax you pay to the Board of Equalization each time you purchase petroleum.
- To access the Fund you must be eligible, complete and submit a claim form, and pay a deductible.
- For more information you may contact the Fund at (800) 813-3863 or visit their web site at www.swrcb.ca.gov/cwphome/ustcf/fundhome.htm.