DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND QUALITY
5500 OVERLAND AVE, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92123
(858) 505-6700 OR (800) 253-9933

Amy Harbert
DIRECTOR

Heather Buonomo
DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

2026
********** INFORMATION BULLETIN **********

UPDATE SUMMARY

- **UST Plan Review & Inspection Fees for Fiscal Year 2026-2027**
- **Title 23 Regulations - Effective 1/1/2026**
- **Title 23 Regulations - Summary of Changes**
- **Accuracy and Completeness of Test Forms**

UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK PROGRAM UPDATE

The Hazardous Materials Division (HMD) is the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) for the County of San Diego. As the local CUPA, the HMD implements the Unified Program and regulates businesses that manage underground storage tanks (UST).

HMD recently made operational changes in the UST Program to better assist UST owners and operators in meeting regulatory requirements. This bulletin outlines the changes and updates that may be helpful to UST owners, operators, contractors, consultants, and other parties interested in UST management.

If you have any questions, please contact Cecilia Lewallen, UST Program Supervisor, at Cecilia.Lewallen@sdcounty.ca.gov.

UST Plan Review & Inspection Fees – Effective July 11, 2026

In accordance with the San Diego County Code of Regulatory Ordinances, Division 5, Section 65.107, the following UST Plan Review & Inspection Fees have ***changed*** for the Fiscal Year 2026-2027.

Activity	Fee Code	Fees *effective 07/11/2026*
New UST Construction		
Installation fee for first tank	6HUNT--EHO	$3,154
Installation fee for each additional tank	6HUNT--EHO	$826
Operating permit fee per tank	6HUST--EHO	$575
UST Upgrade or Repair		
Underground Storage Tank Modification/Upgrade - Base Fee (up to 10 hours)	6HURT1-EHO	$1,758
Underground Storage Tank Modification/Upgrade - Hourly rate (over 10 hours)	6HURT2-EHO	*See hourly rate below*
UST Closure		
Underground Storage Tank Closure/Removal - Base Fee (up to 11 hours)	6HUAT--EHO	$1,927
Underground Storage Tank Closure/Removal - Hourly rate (over 11 hours)	6HUAT--EHO	*See hourly rate below*
Other Fees		
Consultation fee per hour	6HUCONSEHO	$197/hour
Plan Re-review	6HUPLANEHO	$241
UST PC Additional Inspection/Re-inspection[1]	6HUADD-EHO	$1,061

[1] Any additional inspections for a UST installation permit will be subject to an additional fee of $966.00. If you are unsure how many inspections are required for a particular project, please contact the Plan Check Specialist at (619) 454-9672.

Title 23 Regulations – Effective 1/1/2026

The Underground Storage Tank (UST) Regulations were amended to align with current technology and operational practices and to remove outdated deadlines. The regulations were also reorganized to group related topics together for easy reference. Additionally, some terminology was updated for specificity and clarity.

A copy of the updated Title 23 Regulations, effective 1/1/2026, is available at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/ust/regulatory/docs/ccr23-chapter-16-2026.pdf.

Title 23 Regulations - Summary of Changes

This section summarizes key changes. Some details or context may have been omitted. For complete information, please consult the regulations --linked above.

Article 1: Definition of Terms, Exclusions, and Recordkeeping

- New Definitions have been added.
- Owners/operators must notify UPAs in writing at least 72 hours prior to testing (formerly 48 hours).

Article 3: Certification, Licensing, and Training Requirements

- The "Designated UST Operator Visual Inspection Report Form" must include the dated release detection alarm history and identify the next due date for each required periodic test.
- Before installing or repairing any UST system component, service technicians must possess current manufacturer-issued training certificates.

Article 4: Design, Construction, and Operation Requirements

- All tank entries must be through a manway.
- USTs installed on or after July 1, 2026, must bear a marking, code stamp, or label, located within the perimeter of the sump collar documenting the items listed in section 2641(a).
- For all tanks manufactured on or after July 1, 2026, the manufacturer must provide documentation to the owner confirming that the manufacturer has verified continuity within the tank interstice.
- Tanks installed on or after January 1, 2027, must be anchored to prevent flotation.
- Single-walled spill containment structures in direct contact with backfill which require

replacement must be replaced with secondarily contained spill containment.

Article 5: Monitoring Requirements

- Minimum content for the Monitoring Site Plan includes: a scaled diagram indicating the layout of the tank(s) and piping to the extent known, including containment sumps; locations of all release detection equipment; and if applicable, each vacuum, pressure, or hydrostatic (VPH) interstitial monitoring zone.
- Response Plan content modified to include that any unauthorized release will be removed from secondary containment as soon as practical.
- Release detection equipment must only be disabled during testing, replacement, or repair by a service technician with notification to the UPA.
- An alternative monitoring program must be implemented if interstitial monitoring release detection equipment is or is expected to be non-functional more than 24 hours.
- Temporary closure is required if the release detection system is or is expected to be non-functional more than 30 days.
- Mechanical release detection equipment used to continuously monitor under-dispenser containment, including an impact shear valve, which on or after January 1, 2026, fails to function properly at any time, cannot be repaired and must be replaced with approved continuous electronic release detection equipment.
- On or after July 1, 2026, at facilities that are not routinely staffed, UST systems with pressurized piping that are not emergency tank systems must have a continuous interstitial release detection system that shuts off the flow of hazardous substance through the piping when it detects a release from the piping or the release detection system malfunctions.
- Buried pressurized piping monitored by a continuous VPH interstitial release detection system that shuts off the flow of hazardous substance through the piping when it detects a release, or the release detection system malfunctions satisfies the line leak detector requirement. The use of this option is contingent upon the ability to be able to annually certify that the VPH monitoring can detect a 3.0 gph leak at 10 psi. To date, there is no available method to demonstrate compliance with this requirement, and this is not a current viable option.
- Piping monitored by continuous VPH interstitial monitoring must be configured to facilitate required periodic testing so that continuity can be confirmed for each zone to the extent practical.
- Remote monitoring must provide an immediate notification to a facility employee or service technician.

Article 6: Testing Requirements

- Test equipment must be calibrated and maintained in accordance with the test equipment manufacturer.
- Testing of release detection equipment for VPH monitored piping must verify continuity between the sensors and most distant points in the zone to the extent practical as approved by

the UPA.

- Secondary containment testing for piping must include verification of continuity between the most distant points in the zone to the extent practical as approved by the UPA.
- Line leak detectors used for performing annual line tightness testing must be tested with a simulated 0.1 gph leak at 150% of normal operating pressure. *Note: 0.1 gph testing does not apply to Type 3 USTs (VPH), lines tested by a licensed tank tester, or piping quipped with fail-safe interstitial monitoring.*
- Testing of systems that utilize under-dispenser containment mechanical release detection equipment and an impact shear valve to stop flow at the dispenser must verify proper function to confirm that hazardous substance will not dispense when the valve is closed. If equipment of this type fails to function properly at any time, the valve and any other non-functional release detection equipment must be replaced with continuous electronic release detection equipment before resuming dispensing.

Article 8: Closure Requirements

- The UST owner or operator must receive approval for temporary closure from the UPA prior to initiating temporary closure.
- For permanent closure, the time between cessation of hazardous substance storage and completion of permanent closure must not exceed 365 days from the date of approval by the UPA.
- Any compactable soil that is imported onto the site for the purpose of backfilling an excavation while closing a UST must be clean compactable backfill.
- Within 30 days of removal of the tank or piping, or collection of required soil or groundwater samples, the owner or operator must provide to the UPA laboratory reports, and documentation demonstrating proper disposal of the tank and hazardous substance piping and any hazardous wastes.
- Abandoned USTs cannot be placed in temporary closure; they must be permanently closed in accordance with these regulations unless, before returning to operation, they:
    - Are equipped with a continuous VPH interstitial release detection system; and
    - Pass Enhanced Leak Detection (ELD) testing.

Article 9: Permit Application, Unified Program Agency Requirements, Trade Secrets, and Red Tag Requirements

- The UPA and the Board must take enforcement action pursuant to H&SC section 25299 or prohibit the operation of a UST system if the owner or operator fails to comply with the construction, monitoring, testing, and reporting requirements of articles 4, 5, 6, and 7.
- The UPA or the Board has the authority to direct the UST operator to empty a red tagged UST within a timeframe determined by the UPA, not to exceed 48 hours from when the red tag is affixed. Red tagged USTs must not be emptied through the dispenser.

Accuracy & Completeness of Test Forms

All test forms submitted to HMD shall be accurate, complete, and representative of the equipment at the facility. Inaccurate reports will be rejected and returned for corrections. Some examples of noted discrepancies are listed below.

Release Detection Equipment Testing Report Form

Section 5 - Monitoring System & Programing:

- The question “Was it confirmed that the flow of hazardous substance stops at the dispenser if a release is detected in the under-dispenser containment?” should be answered as YES only if the UDC sensor is a standalone electronic sensor or a mechanical float-and-chain device. These devices only stop the flow at the single dispenser and do not shut off the turbine.

- The question “Does the pressure supply pump automatically shut down if the piping secondary containment monitoring system detects a release? Which sensors initiate positive shut down? (Check all that apply)” should be answered as YES only if there are electronic sensors in the sump / UDC that will shut off the turbine.

Section 6 – Sensor Testing Results:

- All sensors tested and certified must be included in this section. Although mechanical leak detection (floats & chains) are not included in the electronic sensor programming, they must also be included in this section.

Overfill Prevention Equipment Testing Report Form

- All applicable OPE equipment must be tested for each tank. If a tank requires two separate devices to maintain compliance (i.e., high level alarm and ball float), both devices must be tested and documented on the form.