

STAFF ATTACHMENT

Battalion Chief/Fire Marshal Crafton – Underground Storage Tank Permitting and Testing

When underground storage tanks are scheduled for installation, the installing company is required to file for a permit through the TCEQ as well as a permit through fire prevention.

Underground petroleum storage tanks are either glass wrapped steel or double walled fiberglass. A UL number is stamped on all petroleum tanks regardless of material composition.

Tanks arrive either under pressure, or with a vacuum. Pressurized tanks are soap tested to check for leaks, and vacuum tank gauges are checked upon arrival to confirm the vacuum pressure is the same as it was when it left facility prior to delivery. The gauge is checked again after it is set in the tank pit. This is considered tightness testing.

An additional test for glass wrapped steel is a Holiday test. Holiday testing involves using an electric wand that is waived over the surface of the tank and if there is a hole in glass wrapping, it will cause a spark.

Underground piping comes in two types, double walled fiberglass or flexible piping. Both types are soap tested to confirm tightness.

All underground petroleum tanks and piping systems are required to have an automatic tank gauging system with sensors to monitor for, and detect leaks.

Testing processes can be witnessed and performed either by fire prevention personnel, TCEQ personnel or both. When TCEQ performs inspections, they will provide us with copies as a courtesy. We keep tank records for the life of the tank.

Fire Chief Tatum – Ordinance Requirements Related to Fuel Spills

The requirements for Unattended Motor Fuel Dispensing are as follows:

2304.3 Unattended self-service motor fuel-dispensing facilities. Unattended self-service motor fuel-dispensing facilities shall comply with Sections 2304.3.1 through 2304.3.7.

2304.3.1 General. Where approved, unattended self-service motor fuel-dispensing facilities are allowed. As a condition of approval, the owner or operator shall provide, and be accountable for, daily site visits, regular equipment inspection and maintenance.

2304.3.2 Dispensers. Dispensing devices shall comply with Section 2306.7. Dispensing devices operated by the insertion of coins or currency shall not be used unless approved.

2304.3.3 Emergency controls. Approved emergency controls shall be provided in accordance with Section 2303.2. Emergency controls shall be of a type that is only manually resettable.

2304.3.4 Operating instructions. Dispenser operating instructions shall be conspicuously posted in approved locations on every dispenser and shall indicate the location of the emergency controls required by Section 2304.3.3.

2304.3.5 Emergency procedures. An approved emergency procedures sign, in addition to the signs required by Section 2305.6, shall be posted in a conspicuous location and shall read:

IN CASE OF FIRE, SPILL OR RELEASE

1. USE EMERGENCY PUMP SHUTOFF

2. REPORT THE ACCIDENT!

FIRE DEPARTMENT TELEPHONE NO. _____

FACILITY ADDRESS _____

2304.3.6 Communications. A telephone not requiring a coin to operate or other approved, clearly identified means to notify the fire department shall be provided on the site in a location approved by the fire code official.

2304.3.7 Quantity limits. Dispensing equipment used at unsupervised locations shall comply with one of the following:

1. Dispensing devices shall be programmed or set to limit uninterrupted fuel delivery to 25 gallons and require a manual action to resume delivery.

2. The amount of fuel being dispensed shall be limited in quantity by a preprogrammed card as approved.