PSTB Prevention & Inspection Staff

Albuquerque (Area Code: 505)
Keith Chavez (keith.chavez@state.nm.us) 222-9559
Bart Butler (bart.butler@state.nm.us) 222-9556
Dan Lopez (dan.lopez@state.nm.us) 222-9549
Vacant 222-9548

Carlsbad (Area Code: 575)
Elmer Smith (elmer.smith@state.nm.us) 885-9023

Clovis (Area Code: 575)
Bill Bryant (bill.bryant@state.nm.us) 762-3728

Farmington (Area Code: 505)
Tom Gray (tom.gray@state.nm.us) 566-9745
Bob Bouren (robert.bouren@state.nm.us) 566-9748

Las Cruces (Area Code: 575)
Joe Godwin (joe.godwin@state.nm.us) 524-6300
Lowell Watkins (lowell.watkins@state.nm.us)
524-6300

Las Vegas (Area Code: 505)
Adrian Jaramillo (adrian.jaramillo@state.nm.us)
Telephone: 454-2808

Roswell (Area Code: 575)
Len Murray (leonard.murray@state.nm.us) 624-6123

Santa Fe (Area Code: 505)
Kal Martin (Kalvin.martin@state.nm.us) 476-4390
Vacant 476-4391

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For more information write or call:

New Mexico Environment
Petroleum Storage Tank Bureau
1301 Siler Road, Bldg. B
Santa Fe, NM 87507

(505) 476-4397

Release Detection Requirements for Aboveground Storage Tanks

New Mexico
Environment Department
Petroleum Storage Tank Bureau
1301 Siler Road, Bldg. B
Santa Fe, NM 87507

All aboveground storage tank systems must have leak detection. All aboveground storage tank systems installed prior to August 15, 2003 must have release detection by August 15, 2004. All aboveground tank system installed after August 15, 2003 will have a method of release detection upon installation.

What Is Required?

Piping

All pressurized pipe must have operating automatic line leak detectors. These devices alert the operator to the presence of a leak by restricting or shutting off product flow. They must be tested annually to ensure they are properly installed, maintained, and can detect leaks of three (3) gallons per hour at ten (10) pounds per square inch within one (1) hour. The records of these tests, all calibrations, maintenance, and repairs must be maintained at the facility for at least one (1) year. In addition to the leak detector requirement, piping must have either an annual pressure test or be monitored monthly by interstitial monitoring, visual inspection, or another approved method.

If the piping system is on a suction system, the method of release detection is dependant on whether the piping is aboveground or underground. For underground piping an annual line tightness test is required and shall be conducted in accordance with the testing requirements found in 20.5.6.23.B NMAC. Owners and operators of aboveground piping may use visual inspection as a method of release detection if the piping system meets the following:

1) All portions of the piping are completely visible and readily accessible.
2) Piping is not in contact with the ground or soil.
3) A log must be kept at the facility, which will include the date, time, initials of the inspector/s, comments on the condition of the piping, and the results of each inspection.

Tanks

All aboveground storage tanks must be monitored monthly for the potential loss of product. One (or a combination) of the following methods **must** be used to monitor the tanks:

- **Automatic Tank Gauging**

This equipment tests for loss of product and conducts inventory control. It must be capable of detecting at least a 0.2gallon per hour loss of product. The system may require the tank system to be shut down for a period of time, usually during hours of non-operation.

- **Interstitial Monitoring**

This method of monitoring can include sensors placed in between the wall of the tank or piping and an impervious secondary barrier, or construction of an impervious secondary barrier that will allow for monthly monitoring of the space in between the tank and the barrier.
Double-Walled Systems. Most manufacturers of double-walled aboveground storage tank systems offer monitoring systems that are field installed or factory installed. The monitoring systems may be either electronic or manual and may be connected to automatic monitors.
All sensors used in interstitial monitoring will the tested annually in accordance with manufacturer's requirements to ensure they're still functioning properly.

- **Visual Inspection**

Visual inspection of an aboveground storage tank may be used to meet the requirement of monitoring the tank monthly. The following requirements must be met in order to use this method:

1) The tank must be completely visible and readily accessible.
2) The tank must not be in contact with the ground or soil.
3) A log must be kept at the facility, which will include the date, time, initials of the inspector/s, comments on the condition of the tank, and the results of each inspection.

Reporting Requirements

As of April 4, 2008 owners and operators are required to provide a report of all testing required of AST systems in 20.5 NMAC. The typical testing covered under this requirement is line or tank tightness test conducted in order to assess the integrity of the storage tank system, or to meet release detection requirements. The report must contain the following:

1) Name of the technician who performed the test;
2) Training and equivalent experience of the technician in the type of testing performed, including certification numbers & national association where certification was obtained, or a detailed description of where and when the technician gained experience;
3) Brand name and model number of testing equipment used during the test, and date the testing equipment was last calibrated and by whom;
4) Date of the test;
5) Duration of the test;
6) Results of the test.

Note:
If the owner wishes to use another method they believe will provide equivalent protection of the environment as the methods listed above they must submit their plans to the Department. The owner shall not begin installation until the Department approves the request.