

Sump and Spill Bucket Inspections

While tank system upgrades and/or replacements have greatly reduced the number of releases, many systems continue to experience releases. Sumps (and the equipment contained within the sump) and Spill Buckets are two areas that frequently can be the source of a release. In response to concerns about these releases, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Underground Storage Tanks (OUST) has recently released a draft guidance document and checklist on how to conduct inspections and proper maintenance of sumps and spill buckets. Many states explicitly require owners or operators keep their sumps and spill buckets dry and free of petroleum product, water and debris.

Proper sump inspection and maintenance is generally simple and inexpensive, and can help you minimize the risk of expensive cleanups.

EPA's Energy Alt 2005 Recommendations Are:

Sump inspections should be performed on a monthly basis; however, some items (e.g., checking the spill buckets for liquids before and after each delivery and following every rainfall) may need more frequent inspections.

Sumps should be checked for several things:

- Are the sump lids tight?
- Are the sump walls intact?
- Does the sump contain dirt and debris?
- Are cracks or holes present?
- Are leaks or drips present?
- Are sensors positioned correctly?
- Is the piping and other equipment in good condition?



For spill buckets, operators should check:

- Are the spill bucket lids in good condition?
- Are the spill buckets clean and empty?
- Do the spill buckets have holes or cracks?
- If the spill buckets have drains, do the plungers and drains operate properly?

A complete copy of the draft guidance is available on the following website:

www.sigma.org/news-n-views/SUMP.pdf

Remember – Routine equipment inspections and proper maintenance are essential to preventing another generation of leaking Underground Storage Tank systems.