Underground Storage Tank Program
November 2026 Update

Test Equipment Calibration

California Code of Regulations, title 23, division 3, chapter 16 (Underground Storage Tank (UST) Regulations), section 2660(e) requires equipment used to administer a test must be maintained and calibrated in accordance with manufacturer's standards. The intent of this requirement is to ensure the accuracy and reliability of testing equipment, particularly dynamic equipment (e.g., gauges, line leak detector testing units, etc.), where a device's accuracy may be affected by environmental factors or changes over time. This requirement is not intended for static measuring devices such as rulers, tape measures, graduated beakers, or cylinders.

If manufacturer standards are unavailable, the equipment must be calibrated by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), a NIST accredited laboratory, or replaced. If calibration is not feasible, service technicians may choose to replace the equipment instead (e.g., gauges). Replacement equipment may be purchased with calibration documentation provided by the manufacturer. These certificates are typically valid for one year, after which the equipment may need to be recalibrated or replaced, depending on the manufacturer's standards.

Service technicians must ensure that each piece of testing equipment has a serial number or other unique identifier specific to that device. The identifier should appear on both the equipment and its calibration certificate. If newly purchased testing equipment does not have a manufacturer assigned unique identifier, the service technician must assign one to the device.

Documentation demonstrating that testing equipment is in proper operating condition must be available to the Unified Program Agency (UPA) upon request at the time of testing. A calibration sticker or tag directly affixed to the testing equipment may serve as supporting documentation. UPA inspectors should review calibration documentation for all dynamic equipment used during testing. If a service technician is unable to provide the required documentation upon request, the UPA inspector must issue UST Program Violation 2031006.

For more information regarding calibration, contact Austin Lemire-Baeten at (916) 327-5612 or Austin.Lemire-Baeten@waterboards.ca.gov.

Abandoned Single-Walled USTs

Effective January 1, 2027, single-walled USTs that have not been permanently closed may be considered abandoned if they meet all the following criteria:

- Has not had a functional release system for more than 365 days
- Does not have a current operating permit
- Has not been permanently or temporarily closed in accordance with UST Regulations, article 8
- Is not a decommissioned tank

Abandoned USTs must either be permanently closed in accordance with UST Regulations section 2681 or meet the requirements for returning to service. To resume operation, an abandoned UST must be equipped with continuous vacuum, pressure, hydrostatic (VPH) interstitial monitoring and pass the Enhanced Leak Detection Test required by section 2662(b)(2) before returning to service.

As a reminder, all abandoned UST facilities must be reported in Report 6, and associated compliance inspections must be recorded in California Environmental Reporting System (CERS). The State Water Resources Control Board's (State Water Board) UST Leak Prevention Unit works with the State Water Board Office of Enforcement to reconcile the abandoned UST facility inventory at the close of each Report 6 reporting period. Because this information is submitted to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), accurate reporting of abandoned UST facilities is essential. Additionally, this coordination helps identify UPAs that may need enforcement assistance.

For questions or assistance with enforcement of single-walled USTs, contact Jenna Hartman at (916) 327-8563 or Jenna.Hartman@waterboards.ca.gov.

For additional information regarding abandoned tanks and reporting requirements, contact Magnolia Busse at (916) 341-5780 or Magnolia.Busse@waterboards.ca.gov.

Anchoring USTs

Effective January 1, 2027, all USTs installed on or after this date must be anchored, regardless of groundwater depth, in accordance with UST Regulations section 2642(e)(1). Although the regulations do not prescribe a specific anchoring method, the method used must follow the manufacturer specifications, an applicable industry code or engineering standard, or engineering specifications approved by a state registered professional engineer. Anchoring systems must be designed to prevent tank flotation following installation.

When a tank manufacturer provides buoyancy calculations and associated anchoring methods, the tank must be anchored in accordance with those specifications.

Alternative anchoring methods or buoyancy calculations may be used if they are developed and approved by a state registered professional engineer. UPAs should verify that the proposed anchoring method is supported by the applicable manufacturer specifications or approved engineering documentation to ensure compliance with section 2642(e)(1). Proper anchoring is critical to preventing tank flotation, which can result in significant damage and costly repairs and replacement.

For additional information regarding anchoring on USTs, contact Austin Lemire-Baeten at (916) 327-5612 or Austin.Lemire-Baeten@waterboards.ca.gov.

International Code Council Examination Modifications

Designated operators, service technicians, and UST inspectors are required to maintain International Code Council (ICC) certifications to demonstrate their knowledge of the statutes and regulations governing California's USTs. Over the past year, the State Water Board has worked with ICC to update the following California UST certification examinations:

UC	California UST System Operator
UI	California UST Inspector
UT	California UST Service Technician

The examinations have been updated to reflect the 2026 amendments to the UST Regulations[1] and Health and Safety Code, chapter 6.7[2] (H&SC). These documents, along with the Petroleum Equipment Institute's Recommended Practices 1200-24 will be the only required reference materials.

The updated California UST ICC certification examinations will be administered beginning January 15, 2027, at Pearson VUE testing centers or online through ICC's PRONTO system. All three examinations will be open book. Candidates may take an examination up to six times within a six-month period, with a mandatory 10-day waiting period between unsuccessful attempts. Candidates who fail an examination six times must wait six months before attempting the exam again.

For additional information regarding updated ICC tests, contact Austin Lemire-Baeten at (916) 327-5612 or Austin.Lemire-Baeten@waterboards.ca.gov.

Learning Management Systems Course Changes

The California CUPA (CalCUPA) Learning Management System (LMS) offers UST courses that provide continuing education credits to help inspectors maintain their ICC certifications. Following the amendments to the UST Regulations that took effect

[1] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/ust/regulatory/docs/ccr23-chapter-16-2026.pdf
[2] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/ust/regulatory/docs/hsc-ch67-2026.pdf

January 1, 2026, many of these courses now contain outdated information that will no longer be aligned with the updated ICC examinations.

The Division of Water Quality UST Program manager has reviewed the UST courses available on the LMS to identify those containing outdated information. These courses will remain available on the LMS. However, individuals must complete them by January 14, 2027, to receive ICC continuing education credit. After this date, the courses will no longer qualify for ICC credit, and their listed ICC credit hours will be removed. A selection of UST courses will continue to offer ICC continuing education credit after January 14, 2027. Additional opportunities to earn ICC continuing education credit include UST Technical Advisory Group meetings and UST training sessions offered at CUPA Conferences.

Individuals are encouraged to verify the number of ICC credit hours associated with each course before enrolling to ensure they receive the appropriate credit. The LMS will also be updated to include the UST courses from the 2027 CUPA conference and additional recorded training sessions.

For questions regarding outdated LMS courses, contact Austin Lemire-Baeten at (916) 327-5612 or Austin.Lemire-Baeten@waterboards.ca.gov.

Facility Compliance Inspection Reporting

UST Regulations section 2692(b) requires UPAs to report to the State Water Board, by January 31 each year, the number of UST facilities where a compliance inspection was not conducted during the previous calendar year and the reason each inspection was not performed.

The State Water Board must report annually to the U.S. EPA on Technical Compliance Rate (TCR) performance measures established under the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (EPAct), including certification that UST facilities meet the federal inspection frequency requirement.

The State Water Board recommends that UPAs use the UST Routine Inspection Frequency Search[3] tool in the CERS to verify the accuracy of the UST facility compliance inspection records. On October 15, 2026, the State Water Board provided a letter[4] to UPA Management with instructions for utilizing the search tool. UPAs are encouraged to use this tool to identify facilities that have not received a compliance inspection during the 2026 calendar year and verify that inspection information is accurately reported in CERS. This review will help identify missing inspections and inaccurate data. UPAs should run the UST Routine Inspection Frequency search now

[3] https://cersregulator2.calepa.ca.gov/Reports/USTRoutineInspectionFrequencySearch
[4] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/ust/docs/ust-compliance-inspection.pdf

and again in mid-December to allow time to address any missing inspections or inaccurate records before the end of the calendar year.

For information regarding compliance inspection reporting requirements, contact Magnolia Busse at (916) 341-5870 or Magnolia.Busse@waterboards.ca.gov.

Public Records Information Webpage

In addition to the UST compliance inspection reporting, the EPAct requires states to provide an annual summary that is available to the public. This summary must include the number of current UST facilities, UST systems, inspections performed, and information on unauthorized releases. On November 1, 2026, the State Water Board published the Public Records Summary Information of Underground Storage Tanks web page.[5] This summary covers the reporting period from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026, and includes the percentage of UST systems in compliance with TCR performance measures.

For information regarding the public records web page, contact Magnolia Busse at (916) 341-5870 or Magnolia.Busse@waterboards.ca.gov.

Red Tag Data

The State Water Board has updated the red tag application data and significant violations by type on the Red Tag Requirements and Guidance webpage[6] using information provided from Report 6. Between July 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026, 46 UPAs applied red tags to 414 USTs. Of these, 295 red tags were applied between January and June 2026, representing the highest number reported during a six-month reporting period to date and demonstrating increased enforcement activity involving single-walled UST facilities.

For additional information on red tag application data, contact Magnolia Busse at (916) 341-5870 or Magnolia.Busse@waterboards.ca.gov.

Amended Health and Safety Code Posted

The State Water Board has posted an updated courtesy version of 2027 H&SC[7] on its website to reflect legislative amendments taking effect January 1, 2027.

The updated H&SC includes amendments to sections 25288(d) and 25290.1(e), resulting from the enactment of Assembly Bill (AB) 2776, as well as the addition of section 25299.9 pursuant to Senate Bill (SB) 795.

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[5] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/ust/leak_prevention/public_record_sum_info.html
[6] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/ust/enforcement/red_tag_regs_index.html
[7] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/ust/regulatory/docs/hsc-ch67-2027.pdf

The October 2026 UST Program Update[8] provided an overview of AB 2776 and SB 795. Additional information on these bills is available through the following links: AB 2776[9] and SB 795[10]. The State Water Board has also posted a technical program letter[11] about the amendments on the Technical UST Program Notification website.[12]

For additional information regarding H&SC amendments, contact Tom Henderson at (916) 319-9128 or Tom.Henderson@waterboards.ca.gov.

UST Construction, Monitoring, and Testing Requirements Table

The State Water Board has posted a new Overview of UST Construction, Monitoring, and Testing Requirements[13] table on the Technical UST Program Notification webpage to summarize UST system requirements. The table is a general guide of UST construction, monitoring, and testing requirements, and references H&SC, UST Regulations and Local Guidance letters.

For questions regarding the UST construction, monitoring, and testing requirements table, contact Austin Lemire-Baeten at (916) 327-5612 or Austin.Lemire-Baeten@waterboards.ca.gov.

CERS FAQ Website

The State Water Board staff is continuing to update the CERS Business User FAQs Website[14] to align with the amended UST Regulations. The following FAQs have been updated along with their associated citations:

Changing or reusing tank ID numbers[15]
Tank ID number editing process has been updated.

Reporting archived, previously closed but unreported USTs[16]
The process for reporting archived USTs has been updated.

For more information regarding CERS FAQs, please contact Stephanie Duong at (916) 322-8544 or Stephanie.Duong@waterboards.ca.gov.

[8] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/ust/leak_prevention/updates/docs/2026/october2026-ust.pdf
[9] https://calmatters.digitaldemocracy.org/bills/ca_202520260ab2776
[10] https://calmatters.digitaldemocracy.org/bills/ca_202520260sb795
[11] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/ust/tech_notices/ab-2776-sb795.pdf
[12] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/ust/tech_notices.html
[13] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/ust/tech_notices/docs/ust-construction-monitoring-testing-table.pdf
[14] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/ust/cers/
[15] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/ust/cers/bu11_reusing_id.html
[16] https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/ust/cers/bu14_reporting_archived.html