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Inspection of Liquid Fuel Facilities Prior to Backfill

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Liquid fuels safety is a shared responsibility between professional fuel contractors, owners/operators, fuel suppliers and the Technical Standards and Safety Authority (TSSA). Together, we make a difference in the safe distribution, utilization and service of fuels for customers, consumers and local communities. TSSA's Fuels Safety Program recently changed the inspection procedure for pre-license and modification inspections in 2015, and I want to share with you some of the key safety features.

Newly built facilities or modified facilities with newly installed underground equipment now require two inspections: the first prior to the tanks and piping being back-filled, and the second after the site has been commissioned. While most contractors have been notifying the TSSA inspector before the equipment is back-filled, there have been some instances where the inspector was not notified until the site was ready to open for business.

For the first inspection, **the top of the underground tanks and the piping must be exposed** so that the TSSA inspector can verify the certification of the tank and components, and witness the pressure testing of the piping and the hydrostatic testing of the sumps. In addition, the inspector will check:

1. Name and TSSA registration number of contractor responsible for the installation;
2. Name and TSSA certificate number of petroleum mechanic responsible for the installation;
3. Installation coincides with approved drawings;
4. Hydrostatic testing of sumps;
5. Confirmation that the double-wall tanks are holding vacuum or pressure; and
6. Review copies of tank deflection measurements for fiberglass tanks.

This first inspection is very important since it could protect you, the contractor, from future liability. While on site, the TSSA inspector takes photos of the equipment and various test reports, and can ascertain, that at the time of the inspection, the equipment was installed in accordance with the Liquid Fuels Handling Code.

Once the site has been commissioned, the TSSA inspector will do the final inspection prior to opening the site. The inspector will:

1. Verify that the sensors are installed and working, and ensure that the sensors are correctly wired to the panel;
2. Verify that underground piping test boots are loosened;
3. Verify that dispenser stabilizer bars are securely bolted and that shear valves are in the correct position;
4. Check that all applicable signage is in place;
5. For Self-Serve facilities: Activate the intercom and verify that the video monitoring system complies with the Liquid Fuels Handling Code; and
6. Test the E-stop.

TSSA inspection requires a minimum of 10 business days notification for the inspections. RUSH inspections are done on request and are billed at two times the regular hourly rate.