California Environmental Protection Agency

Air Resources Board

Advisory

Cargo Tank Vapor Recovery Certification Testing

Number 154 **July 28, 1998**

Health and Safety Code Section 41962 (g) provides that no person shall operate, or allow the operation of, a tank vehicle transporting gasoline and required to have a vapor recovery system, unless the system has been certified by the state board and is installed and maintained in compliance with the state board's requirements for certification. The state board's test requirements for certification are contained in the Certification and Test Procedures for Vapor Recovery Systems of Cargo Tanks. The Certification and Test Procedures are incorporated by reference in Title 17, California Code of Regulations, Section 94014.

One of the requirements contained in the Test Procedure is that the cargo tank shall be purged of gasoline vapor and be tested empty. The Certification and Test Procedures contains the warning, "Under no circumstances shall the vapor in any cargo tank be purged or vented directly to the atmosphere." A cargo tank shall be purged not in violation of other regulations. Such methods of purging include, but are not limited to:

1. Purging with air to an incinerator certified by the ARB or permitted by a District;
2. Purging with water to an ARB certified vapor recovery system at a bulk plant or terminal which shall recover the purge water in conformity with all applicable regulations;
3. Purging with a liquid with a vapor pressure of less than four pounds Reid (<4 psi RVP) to an ARB certified vapor recovery system at a bulk plant or terminal.

A cargo tank is then deemed to be empty for vapor recovery certification testing purposes.

The most common method of purging or degassing a cargo tank is to run a load of diesel fuel through the cargo tank. In situations where repair or welding is required inside the cargo tank, one method of removing diesel residue is by steam cleaning.

The Air Resources Board Compliance Division enforces all requirements of the Certification and Test Procedures, including the prohibition against venting gasoline vapor directly into the atmosphere. Owners, Operators and independent testers who test cargo tanks for vapor recovery certification are subject to these requirements.

Violations of certification requirements may result in criminal or civil penalties from $1,000 to up to $50,000 for each day in which the violation occurred. The potential penalty for any violation of the regulations is $1,000; if the violation is due to negligence and results in emissions of pollutants, the penalty may be up to $15,000; knowledge of such emissions while failing to take corrective action may increase the penalty up to $25,000; finally, intentional emission of an air contaminant may be subject to a fine of up to $50,000.

If you have any questions regarding this advisory, please call Robert Fricker at (916) 327-1524.

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