

Hiring a Qualified UST Consultant

The State of Michigan requires that you hire an approved Qualified UST Consultant (QC) to complete investigation and cleanup activities for leaking underground storage tanks (LUSTs) in Michigan. The purpose of this document is to aid you in locating and hiring an environmental consultant.

QUALIFIED UST CONSULTANT LIST

The following link will connect you to an index of approved consultants and their respective address and phone number: <http://www.deq.state.mi.us/qclist/>. This list was compiled by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) providing up to date contact information and can be sorted by city, county and several different ways.

The MDEQ does not endorse any specific firm on the list. These firms may or may not have professional engineers or certified professional geologists on staff. Owners and operators are cautioned that the approved QCs have been determined to meet the minimum education and experience requirements necessary to undertake corrective actions at LUST sites in Michigan. The MDEQ is not responsible or liable for the performance of the QC.

EXERCISE CARE IN HIRING A CONSULTANT

As the owner/operator or responsible party, you must be aware that you are ultimately responsible for the investigation and cleanup of your release. Therefore extreme care should be utilized when selecting an environmental consultant, because the responsibility remains with the owner/operator or responsible party even though a consulting firm did the actual work. Please be advised that the same precautions should be taken in hiring an environmental consultant that are taken in hiring any contractor or employee.

TIPS FOR HIRING A CONSULTANT

- Request a Statement of Qualifications. The document should include employee resumes, project summaries, and references.
- Ask for references from previous clients in your local area – AND CHECK THEM!
- Do they offer field and professional services? Who are their subcontractors?
- Inquire about their errors and omissions and pollution liability insurances.
- Do they stay within their projected budgets or are change orders a common practice? Ask about billing procedures.
- Do they keep up with the current rules and regulations?
- Ask about their workload. How soon can they start on your project, and what type of priority will your project receive?
- Consultants based in your local area will have less costly travel time expenses.
- Ask about their experience and qualifications in the type of work you need, and whether they have had audited closures from the MDEQ. What percentage of their work is related to the services you require? What are their fields of specialty?
- Do they have a good Health and Safety record?
- What are their Quality Assurance/Quality Control procedures?

TIPS FOR HIRING A CONSULTANT - continued

- Ask what approach they are considering for your site. Be skeptical of those who hide behind technical jargon and cannot properly explain procedures in plain language.
- Ask if the approach they are proposing to address your site has been successfully implemented and has achieved the desired results at sites with contaminants and hydrogeological conditions similar to yours.
- A patent for a new product is not a guarantee that the product will work.
- **Get a minimum of three bids as prices vary greatly.**

*******Remember that the cheapest bid is not always the best bid*******

STAY INFORMED

Don't assume the consultant is taking care of everything. Follow up and make sure everything is being done to resolve the site and maintain compliance with the law. We recommend an agreed upon schedule be developed with important dates such as when reports are required to be submitted to the MDEQ. You are encouraged to periodically contact the DEQ project manager, who will answer any questions or concerns regarding your facility. Once again, remember that you are responsible for everything your consultant does or fails to do!