

Petroleum Underground Storage Tank (PUST) Program
NON-LEAKING RESIDENTIAL UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK
“FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS”

Effective August 2, 2006, the PUST Fund provides funding to eligible applicants to help finance eligible project costs for the closure/removal and closure/removal/replacement of a non-leaking residential underground storage tank (“UST”). This is not mandatory and strictly voluntary for New Jersey property owners. Listed below are frequently asked questions and responses. **Please take the time and read through the entire package. We are confident that your questions will be answered within this package.**

Am I an eligible applicant?

- * Applicants with a non-leaking residential UST (**owner must own the tank or operator must be responsible for the tank at time application is made with the NJEDA and not have received prior funding from the Program for said tank**) are eligible for funding for closure/removal and closure/removal/replacement of the UST.
- * UST removal and UST/AST installation must have been performed on or after August 2, 2006.
- * Applicants with a **leaking** residential UST are also eligible for closure/removal, upgrade and/or remediation, but need to make application first with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (“NJDEP”) at www.nj.gov/dep/srp.

If I am an eligible applicant, what should I do next?

For applicants with a non-leaking residential UST, **the contractor closing/removing and/or replacing the UST needs to be certified by the NJDEP and complete/sign the Authority Certification form citing the tank is non-leaking.** A list of NJDEP certified contractors can be found on the NJEDA website, www.njeda.com. (If the UST is being replaced with an above ground storage tank (“AST”), the contractor installing the AST does not need to be NJDEP certified.) If the contractor certifying the tank is not leaking is not a NJDEP Certified Contractor, then no funding can be awarded for the removal or replacement of the tank, even if it is with an AST.

When should I submit an application?

An application needs to be submitted once the work has been completed, as long as it has been completed after August 2, 2006. This is a **reimbursement** program. If arrangements cannot be made with the contractor that they complete the work and wait for payment from the program, you will need to pay for the work and receive a reimbursement from the program, if deemed eligible.

What are the limits of funding available from the PUST Fund?

Funding up to \$1,200 may be awarded for the closure/removal of a non-leaking residential UST. The balance of the funding up to \$3,000 may be awarded for the replacement of a non-leaking residential UST. Tanks should be replaced with an AST whenever possible or an UST if an AST is not feasible. The applicant is responsible for costs above these limits to close/remove and close/remove/replace a non-leaking residential UST.

What will the NJEDA require to determine which type of funding can be awarded?

In order to determine the type of award, the following items will need to be included with the application:

- (1) Last 3 years Federal Income Tax Returns of the applicant
- (2) Completed Personal Financial Statement of the applicant (which can be found on the NJEDA website)
- (3) Non-refundable \$250 application fee made payable to the NJEDA

How can I qualify for a grant award?

In order to qualify for a conditional hardship grant, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- (1) An annual taxable income of not more than \$250,000; and
- (2) Net worth, exclusive of applicant’s primary residence and pension (401K, IRAs), of not more than \$500,000; and
- (3) A determination of financial hardship which will be based on whether an applicant can reasonably be expected to repay, if the funding were to be awarded as a loan.

*A grant worksheet to help homeowners determine grant eligibility can be found on the NJEDA’s website.

**If an Executor/Executrix is applying on behalf of an Estate, please contact Customer Service Administrator to find out how determination #3 (financial hardship test) is satisfied.

If you are not eligible for a grant, a loan can be offered from the Program, but with minimum loan costs amounting to an additional \$1,000, it may not be feasible.

Will there be a lien placed on my property?

If a grant is awarded to an applicant and the project site is the applicant's residence, a lien will **not** be placed on the project site.

If a grant is awarded to an applicant and the project site is **not** the applicant's residence, a lien will be placed on the project site in the amount of the entire grant for 5 years and must be repaid upon sale of the project site. The amount of the grant to be repaid is reduced by 25% each year starting at year 2.

If a loan is awarded, a lien will be placed on the property until the property is sold or the loan is repaid, whichever comes first.

How long will it take to receive a check?

Once a completed application is received by the NJEDA and deemed eligible for a grant, a disbursement will be issued in 4-6 weeks. If the applicant paid for the work (cancelled checks must be provided), a one-party check will be issued. If all or some of the work has not been paid for by the applicant, then that portion of the grant will be disbursed in a two-party check, made payable to the applicant and the respective contractor.

What do you consider a completed application?

A completed application includes the following:

- 1) Non-refundable application fee in the amount of \$250
- 2) A completed and signed application
- 3) Completed and signed certification form by the contractor closing/removing the UST citing the tank is non-leaking (said contractor needs to have been certified by NJDEP to close/remove/install UST's and on its certification list)
- 4) Complete set of the last 3 years Federal Income Tax Returns
- 5) Completed and signed personal financial statement
- 6) Invoice(s) for closure/removal of UST
- 7) Invoice(s) for installation of UST or AST (if combined, costs need to be broken out)
- 8) Cancelled checks for the amount of the work that has been paid or computerized paid invoice(s)
- 9) Completed and signed Financial Assistance Agreement
- 10) Completed and signed Disbursement Requisition(s)
- 11) Signed page #2 of the Frequently Asked Questions to acknowledge that it has been read and understood.

Once the above is received, the NJEDA will perform a review to determine if funding can be awarded and in what amount.

How should I get started with this process?

The first stepcomplete the grant worksheet found on our website (www.njeda.com) to see if you would qualify for grant funding. Next.... make sure that the contractor closing/removing and certifying the tank is non-leaking is on the NJDEP's list of certified contractors (the link can be found on our website) Next....have the work completed. Finally...forward a completed application package to the NJEDA for review.

What if I still have questions?

Please contact the NJEDA Customer Support Administrator at 1-609-777-4898. It is suggested that you read through the entire package and complete as much as possible prior to making your phone call, creating a list of questions. As you complete the package, you may be able to answer these questions. The Customer Support Administrator can expedite the process quicker answering a list of questions, rather than multiple phone calls with one question at a time.

Applicant: _____

Date: _____

Co-Applicant: _____

Date: _____