

# WASHINGTON STATE UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK (UST) SITE ASSESSMENT CERTIFICATION PRACTICE TEST (SAMPLE) STUDY GUIDE



## SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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THE FULL VERSION STUDY GUIDE

<https://washingtonstate-ustsiteassessment.examzify.com>



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# Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

# How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

## 1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

## 2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 – 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

## 3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

## 4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

## 5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

## 6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

## Questions

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- 1. What is the primary focus of the Washington UST program?**
  - A. Maximizing operational efficiency of USTs
  - B. Minimizing the risk of releases and ensuring safe UST operation
  - C. Increasing the number of USTs in use
  - D. Reducing operational costs for UST owners
- 2. What does decommissioning refer to in relation to underground storage tanks?**
  - A. Temporarily using a tank for storage
  - B. Taking a tank out of operation in accordance with regulations
  - C. Repairing a tank that is damaged
  - D. Removing a tank and its contents completely
- 3. What is the historical date before which a UST system may have been permanently closed or abandoned that may require a site assessment?**
  - A. January 1, 1990
  - B. December 22, 1988
  - C. June 30, 1985
  - D. April 15, 1987
- 4. Is the vadose zone typically saturated or unsaturated?**
  - A. Saturated
  - B. Unsaturated
  - C. Completely dry
  - D. Fully submerged
- 5. How does the concept of "depth to groundwater" impact UST assessments?**
  - A. A shallow depth to groundwater increases the risk of contamination from USTs during a release
  - B. Depth to groundwater is irrelevant for UST assessments
  - C. Deeper groundwater necessitates more expensive remediation techniques
  - D. Shallower groundwater allows for easier monitoring

**6. What is the range of safe oxygen readings for most petroleum products?**

- A. 0 to 5%
- B. 1 to 10%
- C. 10 to 15%
- D. 15 to 20%

**7. How does a site check differ from a site assessment?**

- A. A site check is for closure; a site assessment is for change of ownership
- B. A site check is an investigation when evidence indicates a release; a site assessment determines if a release has occurred
- C. A site check is required at every inspection; a site assessment is optional
- D. A site check does not require documentation; a site assessment does

**8. Which meter should be used to determine if a tank has been successfully inerted?**

- A. Flammable vapor meter
- B. Oxygen meter
- C. Pressure gauge
- D. Temperature gauge

**9. In Washington State, what is the reporting time frame for a suspected UST release?**

- A. 48 hours
- B. 1 week
- C. 24 hours
- D. Immediately

**10. What are environmental impacts of UST leaks?**

- A. They can lead to clean air legislation
- B. They have minimal effects on surrounding ecosystems
- C. They can contaminate soil and groundwater, posing health risks
- D. They primarily affect only the tank owner



## **Answers**

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1. B
2. B
3. B
4. B
5. A
6. B
7. B
8. B
9. C
10. C

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## **Explanations**

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## 1. What is the primary focus of the Washington UST program?

- A. Maximizing operational efficiency of USTs
- B. Minimizing the risk of releases and ensuring safe UST operation**
- C. Increasing the number of USTs in use
- D. Reducing operational costs for UST owners

*The primary focus of the Washington UST program is to minimize the risk of releases and ensure safe UST operation. This emphasis is crucial because underground storage tanks are commonly used for storing substances like fuel and hazardous materials, which pose significant environmental risks if they leak. By concentrating on minimizing the potential for releases, the program aims to protect groundwater, surface water, and air quality, as well as to safeguard public health. Adherence to safety regulations, regular inspections, and proper maintenance protocols are all part of this focus, ensuring that USTs operate within safe parameters and do not contribute to contamination. This focus also aligns with broader environmental protection goals, which underscore the importance of preventing pollution and maintaining the integrity of natural resources. Programs that incentivize safe operation and technical compliance play a pivotal role in achieving these objectives, surpassing considerations of efficiency or cost that may not directly contribute to safety and environmental protection.*

## 2. What does decommissioning refer to in relation to underground storage tanks?

- A. Temporarily using a tank for storage
- B. Taking a tank out of operation in accordance with regulations**
- C. Repairing a tank that is damaged
- D. Removing a tank and its contents completely

*Decommissioning in the context of underground storage tanks (USTs) refers to taking a tank out of operation in accordance with the regulations set forth by governing bodies. This process typically involves safely closing the tank while ensuring compliance with environmental protection laws to mitigate potential hazards. It is essential that decommissioning procedures follow specific guidelines, including emptying the tank, cleaning it, and filling it with an inert substance or sealing it in a way that prevents leakage and environmental contamination. This definition and process are critical because improper decommissioning can lead to groundwater contamination or other environmental issues. Regulatory requirements exist to ensure that all potential risks are addressed during the decommissioning phase. The other options do not capture the regulatory and systematic approach involved in decommissioning. For instance, temporarily using a tank for storage doesn't relate to the concept of decommissioning; similarly, repairing a tank that is damaged or removing a tank and its contents completely focuses more on operations rather than the regulatory closure of a tank.*

**3. What is the historical date before which a UST system may have been permanently closed or abandoned that may require a site assessment?**

- A. January 1, 1990
- B. December 22, 1988**
- C. June 30, 1985
- D. April 15, 1987

*The correct selection is December 22, 1988, as this date is significant in the context of regulations governing underground storage tanks (USTs). This date corresponds to the implementation of federal regulations set by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which mandated that UST systems installed before this time needed to meet certain standards to ensure proper management and protection of the environment from potential contamination. UST systems that were closed or abandoned before December 22, 1988, may not have complied with the updated requirements, which creates a need for site assessments. These assessments are vital for identifying any potential impacts to the environment, ensuring that any leaks or releases of hazardous substances are addressed. The other dates do not align with the critical regulatory changes made at the federal level regarding UST systems, which is why they are not relevant for determining the historical context for site assessments linked to closure or abandonment.*

**4. Is the vadose zone typically saturated or unsaturated?**

- A. Saturated
- B. Unsaturated**
- C. Completely dry
- D. Fully submerged

*The vadose zone is typically characterized as unsaturated. This zone is the area of soil and rock located above the water table, where the pores contain both air and water, but the water is not filled to capacity. In this region, moisture is present in varying amounts depending on factors like precipitation and soil characteristics, but it does not completely saturate the soil or rock. The unsaturated condition of the vadose zone is crucial for several hydrological processes, including water infiltration and the movement of contaminants, which are key considerations in site assessments for underground storage tanks. Understanding the properties of the vadose zone is essential for assessing groundwater pollution risks and establishing remediation techniques where necessary.*

**5. How does the concept of "depth to groundwater" impact UST assessments?**

- A. A shallow depth to groundwater increases the risk of contamination from USTs during a release**
- B. Depth to groundwater is irrelevant for UST assessments
- C. Deeper groundwater necessitates more expensive remediation techniques
- D. Shallower groundwater allows for easier monitoring

*The concept of "depth to groundwater" is a critical factor in Underground Storage Tank (UST) assessments because it directly influences the risk of contamination in the event of a release. When the groundwater is situated at a shallow depth, it is more susceptible to being impacted by any spills or leaks from the UST. Contaminants can migrate from the soil where the UST is located into the groundwater more readily, posing a significant risk to drinking water supplies and the surrounding environment. Therefore, assessing the depth to groundwater helps professionals determine the potential severity of a release and the necessary precautions or remediation measures. In terms of the other choices, while deeper groundwater can complicate remediation efforts and monitoring, the primary concern remains with how proximity to groundwater increases contamination risks. The relevance of depth to groundwater is not negligible—it plays an essential role in evaluating the potential environmental impact of UST operations.*

**6. What is the range of safe oxygen readings for most petroleum products?**

- A. 0 to 5%
- B. 1 to 10%**
- C. 10 to 15%
- D. 15 to 20%

*The range of safe oxygen readings for most petroleum products is critical for ensuring safety during handling and storage. Typically, petroleum products are flammable and can pose explosive hazards if they are present in an environment with too much oxygen. The correct answer indicates that the safe range of oxygen readings is typically between 1 to 10%. This range allows for sufficient oxygen to support combustion without reaching levels that would significantly increase the risk of fire or explosion. Higher oxygen levels can lead to a heightened risk of combustion, while levels below 1% may not provide enough oxygen for safe operation in a controlled setting. Therefore, maintaining oxygen readings in the specified range is essential for the safety of operations involving petroleum products and helps to prevent potentially hazardous situations. The other options reflect oxygen levels that might either be too low for safe combustion processes or too high, creating safety risks in environments where petroleum products are present.*

## 7. How does a site check differ from a site assessment?

- A. A site check is for closure; a site assessment is for change of ownership
- B. A site check is an investigation when evidence indicates a release; a site assessment determines if a release has occurred**
- C. A site check is required at every inspection; a site assessment is optional
- D. A site check does not require documentation; a site assessment does

*A site check is specifically conducted when there is evidence or suspicion that a release of hazardous substances, such as petroleum or other contaminants, has occurred at an underground storage tank site. It serves as an immediate investigation to assess the extent of any potential release, providing a targeted approach to detect contamination and address any immediate risks. In contrast, a site assessment is a more comprehensive evaluation that aims to determine if a release has occurred and to what extent. This involves a thorough investigation of the site, including reviewing historical data, sampling soil and groundwater, and assessing environmental impacts. A site assessment goes beyond just confirming a release and focuses on understanding the full implications and conditions of the site. Thus, option B accurately reflects the distinct purposes and approaches of a site check versus a site assessment.*

## 8. Which meter should be used to determine if a tank has been successfully inerted?

- A. Flammable vapor meter
- B. Oxygen meter**
- C. Pressure gauge
- D. Temperature gauge

*Using an oxygen meter is essential for determining if a tank has been successfully inerted because the primary goal of inerting is to reduce the oxygen level within the tank to prevent potential flammable atmospheres. An inerted tank should have an oxygen concentration below a certain threshold, typically around 10%, which ensures that combustion cannot occur. The oxygen meter measures the percentage of oxygen present in the air inside the tank. If the reading is significantly low, it indicates that the inerting process has been successful, and the environment is safe from combustion risks. This is why this type of meter is specifically designed and utilized for safety checks in environments where flammable vapors may be released. While other meters also have their functional purposes – the flammable vapor meter detects the presence of flammable vapors, the pressure gauge monitors internal tank pressure, and the temperature gauge assesses temperature changes – they do not provide the specific information needed to confirm the successful reduction of oxygen levels, which is critical for safety in tank inerting operations.*



**9. In Washington State, what is the reporting time frame for a suspected UST release?**

- A. 48 hours
- B. 1 week
- C. 24 hours**
- D. Immediately

*In Washington State, the reporting time frame for a suspected underground storage tank (UST) release is critically important for ensuring timely response and mitigation of potential environmental hazards. Reporting within 24 hours is mandated to allow regulatory agencies to promptly assess and address any risks posed by the release. This timeframe ensures that investigations and remedial actions can begin as soon as possible, reducing the potential for contamination of soil and groundwater, which can pose serious health and environmental risks. By having a clear 24-hour reporting requirement, it encourages UST owners and operators to act swiftly, facilitating quicker response actions that align with public safety regulations and environmental protection measures. The other options either extend the response timeframe unnecessarily or do not comply with state regulations, which emphasize immediate attention to suspected releases to prevent further environmental damage.*

**10. What are environmental impacts of UST leaks?**

- A. They can lead to clean air legislation
- B. They have minimal effects on surrounding ecosystems
- C. They can contaminate soil and groundwater, posing health risks**
- D. They primarily affect only the tank owner

*The correct choice highlights that leaks from underground storage tanks (USTs) can contaminate both soil and groundwater, which are critical components of environmental health. When a UST leaks, the hazardous substances it contains can seep into the surrounding soil, drastically affecting soil quality and the organisms that depend on it. More critically, once these contaminants reach the groundwater, they can spread widely and potentially affect drinking water supplies, leading to serious health risks for humans and wildlife. The presence of toxic compounds in these environments can result in long-term ecological damage and can necessitate costly remediation efforts. This option captures the broader environmental and health implications of UST leaks, which extend beyond the immediate vicinity of the tank and impact public health, water quality, and ecosystem integrity. These considerations underline the importance of strict regulations and monitoring to ensure that USTs are well-maintained and any potential leaks are promptly addressed. The other options either misconstrue the scope of the impact or dismiss the severity of the risks involved.*

## Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at [hello@examzify.com](mailto:hello@examzify.com).

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

<https://washingtonstate-ustsiteassessment.examzify.com>

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!

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