

# Hiring an Environmental Consultant

The services of a qualified consultant may be necessary to assist you with the investigation and cleanup activities for leaking underground storage tanks in Montana. This document is intended to aid you in locating and hiring an environmental consultant that will best serve the remediation needs of your particular release.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTING FIRM QUALIFICATION MATRIX

The attached matrix has been compiled by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Petroleum Tank Cleanup Section, to assist you in hiring a firm that will best fit your environmental investigation and cleanup needs. **Please note that the information presented in the matrix is voluntarily provided by the firms and compiled without verification by the DEQ, and that it does not encompass every available consultant in Montana.** Additional environmental consulting firms, both within and outside the state of Montana are available to assist you with your environmental needs. Only those firms that submitted information to the DEQ have been included in this matrix. This matrix was last updated in November 2014.

**The DEQ does not endorse any consulting firms, whether they are listed in the matrix or not. These firms may or may not have professional engineers, licensed monitoring well installers, or licensed tank installers/ removers on staff. For verification of engineering licensing, please refer to the Montana Department of Labor and Industry website: <https://ebizws.mt.gov/PUBLICPORTAL/searchform?mylist=licenses> or contact the Montana Board of Professional Engineers and Professional Land Surveyors at (406) 841-2017. For verification of monitoring well installers, contact the Board of Water Well Contractors at (406) 444-0862.**

## 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 used when selecting an environmental consultant, because the responsibility will remain with the owner/operator or responsible party even though a consulting firm does the actual work. Please be advised that the same precautions should be taken in hiring an environmental consultant that should be taken when hiring any contractor or employee.

## TIPS FOR HIRING A CONSULTANT

1. Ask for references from previous clients in your area – and check them!
2. Ask about their experience and qualifications in the type of work you need, whether they have previously dealt with the Montana DEQ, or whether they have experience properly handling soil and water samples.
3. Ask how soon they can begin work at your site.
4. Ask what approach they would consider for your site, and look for consultants that consider a variety of possible alternatives rather than consultants that seem to only consider one set procedure. Be skeptical of those who hide behind technical jargon and cannot properly explain procedures in plain language.
5. Ask about former clients' success in receiving Petroleum Tank Release Compensation Fund reimbursements for their work, and verify this by calling the PTRCB staff at (406) 444-9710 or 1 (800) 556-5291.
6. 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. You are encouraged to periodically contact the DEQ case 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!

[Matrix Table](#)

[Matrix Form-Fillable](#)