Hiring an Environmental Consultant

Why you need an Environmental Consultant

Removing an underground storage tank (UST), responding to a spill and cleaning up contaminated sites require the services of a qualified Environmental Consultant. Follow these steps to help you find and hire an Environmental Consultant:

Step 1. Contact the appropriate regulatory agency (Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, Washington State Department of Ecology).
  - Ask the agency representative to go over necessary actions so you can relay them to an Environmental Consultant.

Step 2. Find Environmental Consultants.
  - Search the phone book or online for ‘Tank,’ ‘Environmental Services,’ ‘Environmental Consulting,’ ‘Environmental Remediation’ and ‘Engineering – Environmental.’
  - Washington State Department of Ecology and the Pollution Liability Insurance Agency maintain lists of environmental service providers (see Resources, below).
  - Get referrals from other commercial property owners, realtors, insurance brokers, attorneys, business associations, commercial lenders and other companies in your industry.

Step 3. Interview the Environmental Consultants.
  - Interview a minimum of three companies and ask:
    o About their portfolio – are they experienced with projects in Pierce County?
    o Do they know what regulations and agencies apply (Health Department, Department of Ecology)
    o Do they have the correct license/certifications to perform this type of work, or does their company provide personnel with the necessary qualifications?
    o Ask the environmental consultant to carefully explain their bid:
      ▪ Does it appropriately address the Health Department’s and Dept. of Ecology’s requirements?
      ▪ Does it include all permitting and reporting expenses?
      ▪ What about subcontracted services (i.e. utility locates, waste removal/disposal, equipment rental, laboratory analysis?)
      ▪ What if unexpected contamination is discovered warranting further clean up?
      ▪ How soon can they start? Does the consultant’s schedule work with yours?

Step 4. Do they meet your needs?
  - Did the consultant seem professional, experienced and organized?
  - Do I understand the issue(s) that need to be resolved?
  - Did the consultant provide an explanation and plan that makes sense?
  - Did they provide cost and timeline to resolve all the issues?

Resources

Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, [www.tpchd.org/healthy-places/contaminated-property-cleanup/underground-storage-tanks](http://www.tpchd.org/healthy-places/contaminated-property-cleanup/underground-storage-tanks)