# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS about
# Biodiesel in Underground Storage Tanks

## What is biodiesel?

Biodiesel is a cleaner-burning diesel fuel replacement made from vegetable oil. Using biodiesel in a conventional diesel engine can substantially reduce emissions of unburned hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide, sulfates and particulate matter. Biodiesel is also much less toxic to the environment than petroleum-based diesel and biodegrades much faster. Different blends of biodiesel and petroleum diesel are on the market. Higher blends of biodiesel, including 100 percent biodiesel, are most popular for marine vessels and other applications in pristine or vulnerable environments. Blends such as 20 percent biodiesel are popular for general use in cars and trucks.

## How do North Carolina's underground storage tank regulations apply to biodiesel?

A UST system that stores a mixture of biodiesel blended with petroleum diesel, another petroleum product, or a hazardous substance is regulated pursuant to the state's UST rules (15A NCAC 2N). Owners and operators of regulated UST systems must comply with certain requirements including financial responsibility, corrosion protection, leak detection, and spill and overfill prevention. One hundred percent biodiesel contains no petroleum-based products or hazardous substances. Therefore, North Carolina's UST regulations do not apply to these UST systems unless a release is discovered. If a release from a 100% biodiesel UST system is discovered, an owner or operator must comply with the requirements for initial response and abatement, assessment and corrective action pursuant to the state's groundwater quality rules (15A NCAC 2L).

## What if I change the use of a tank from diesel to 100 % biodiesel?

To request a change in the status of a regulated diesel UST system to a non-regulated 100% biodiesel UST system, owners or operators must complete the following steps: (1) submit a UST-3 form, *Notice of Intent: UST Permanent Closure or Change-in-Service*; (2) conduct a site assessment in accordance with requirements established in 15A NCAC 2N .0802 and .0803 and the UST Section's *Guidelines for Site Checks, Tank Closure, and Initial Response and Abatement*; and (3) submit a UST-2 form, *Site Investigation Report for Permanent Closure or Change-in-Service of UST* along with a tank closure report.

## Who should I contact regarding a spill of biodiesel?

Although 100 percent biodiesel is far less toxic to the environment than petroleum diesel, it can still be a problem if spilled or released. Spills or releases of 100% biodiesel or biodiesel mixtures must be reported to the UST Section within 24-hours of discovery by submitting a *24-Hour Release and UST Leak Reporting Form* (UST-61 Form) to one of the UST Section Regional Offices listed below. The *24-Hour Release and UST Leak Reporting Form* can be downloaded from the UST Section's web site (http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/wm/) or by calling a UST Section Regional Office.

| **Regional Offices** | **Telephone #** | **Fax #** |
|---|---|---|
| Asheville Regional Office | (828) 296-4500 | (828) 299-7043 |
| Fayetteville Regional Office | (910) 486-1541 | (910) 486-0707 |
| Mooresville Regional Office | (704) 663-1699 | (704) 663-6040 |
| Raleigh Regional Office | (919) 791-4200 | (919) 571-4718 |
| Washington Regional Office | (252) 946-6481 | (252) 975-3716 |
| Wilmington Regional Office | (910) 796-7215 | (910) 350-2004 |
| Winston-Salem Regional Office | (336) 771-5000 | (336) 771-4632 |