FAQs from the NWGLDE

…All you ever wanted to know about leak detection, but were afraid to ask.

Guess What? With this issue of *LUSTLine* we are launching a new section called "FAQs from the NWGLDE" by the National Work Group on Leak Detection Evaluation, an independent work group comprised of 10 members—eight representing various states and two from the U.S. EPA. The Work Group plans to publish the answers to frequent questions they receive from regulators and people in the industry on leak detection. If you have questions for the group, please contact them at *questions@nwglde.org* . (Please note: the views expressed in this column represent those of the work group and do not necessarily represent those of any implementing agency.)

FYI, the mission of the NWGLDE is to:

- Review leak detection system third-party evaluations to determine if each evaluation was performed in accordance with an acceptable leak-detection test method protocol and ensure that the leak-detection system meets EPA and/or other applicable regulatory performance standards
- Review only draft and final leak-detection test method protocols submitted to the work group by a peer review committee to ensure they meet equivalency standards stated in the U.S. EPA standard test procedures
- Make the results of such reviews available to interested parties

Can ELLDs Be Used as a Line-Tightness Test Method?

Q. Companies such as Veeder-Root and INCON are marketing their electronic line leak detectors (ELLDs) to the regulated community as Line-Tightness Test Methods, in addition to meeting the line leak-detector criteria. Under the specs for each ELLD, the 11th edition, 2004, List Of Leak Detection Evaluations For Storage Tank Systems shows that a 0.1gph test is possible, but does not specify its equivalence to a line-tightness test. However, the NWGLDE listing for Line-Tightness Test Methods does not list any ELLDs as being acceptable as a Line-Tightness Test Method (pg. 13, 11th edition of the List). So, my questions are: (1) Are there any ELLDs that can do a line-tightness test? (2) If so, where can I find that list?

A. You are right, ELLDs are not listed by the NWGLDE under Line-Tightness Test Methods. However, many, but not all, of them were third-party tested at the 0.1gph leak rate under the same range of environmental and pipeline configuration conditions that are used to test systems that conduct monthly monitoring and line-tightness tests. The performance of the ELLD during third-party testing is documented on the NWGLDE List data sheet for the equipment.

If the ELLD has sufficient performance characteristics, it can be used to satisfy the monthly monitoring test or annual line-test requirements. The leak rate of 0.1gph is an equivalent leak rate at a lesser pressure, since the ELLD does not typically test the piping at one and one-half times the operating pressure. (See USEPA Standard Test Procedures for Evaluating Leak Detection Methods: Pipeline Leak Detection Systems, September 1990.) The decision to accept or deny use of this method remains with the implementing agency.

You can identify ELLDs that have an acceptable third-party result at a 0.1gph leak rate by looking at the method summary page for Automatic Electronic Line Leak Detectors at *http://www.nwglde.org/methods/automatic_electronic_lld.html* . ■

L.U.S.T.LINE
New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission
Boott Mills South
100 Foot of John Street
Lowell, MA 01852-1124

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