



State of Oregon Department of Environmental Quality

Frequently Asked Questions for Verifiers

Oregon GHG Reporting Program
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Find answers to commonly asked questions about performing verification activities for Oregon's GHG Reporting Program. Click to navigate to a specific question in the Table of Contents below. If you do not see the answer to your question here, please email us at 3PVerify@deq.oregon.gov. This document is frequently updated with new questions and responses.

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General verification questions

Will DEQ reach out to regulated entities in Oregon about their verification requirements in 2022?

Yes, DEQ will reach out to ensure that the entities that are potentially subject to verification for the program understand what is required of them. However, regulated entities are ultimately responsible for complying with the provisions of OAR 340-272, including verification applicability.

Does accreditation for California Air Resources Board's (CARB) Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS) program allow verifiers and verification bodies to perform verification activities for Oregon's Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program?

All verifiers and verification bodies who want to perform verification activities for Oregon's Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program must be accredited either through [CARB's Mandatory Reporting Program \(MRR\)](#), or through the [ANSI National Standards Board's GHG Validation and Verification Body accreditation program](#).

Is DEQ planning to allow for virtual site visits if the pandemic continues?

If virtual site visits are a need for the 2022 verification year, DEQ will provide guidance to stakeholders.

What verification forms will DEQ provide on its website, and who is responsible for submitting them?

DEQ will provide the following forms on its 3PV website:

Conflict of interest disclosure: Administered through Adobe Sign and submitted by the responsible entity. Available under "Information for Responsible Entities" for the appropriate program.

Notice of verification services form: Administered through Adobe Sign and submitted by the verification body. Available under both "Information for Verification Bodies" and "Information for Verifiers" for the appropriate program

Verification statement: Administered through Adobe Sign and submitted by the verification body. Available under both “Information for Verification Bodies” and “Information for Verifiers” for the appropriate program. If the verification is for a CFP fuel pathway application, annual fuel pathway report or CFP quarterly reports, the verification statement must also be uploaded to the Oregon Fuels Reporting System using the “Verification Statement” action on the “RptReviews” tab.

For verification, will we submit the same Conflict of Interest (COI) and Notice of Verification Services (NOVS) forms as are submitted to CARB? Or will they be exclusive to DEQ?

DEQ has its own COI and NOVS forms, which are available on our website and administered through Adobe Sign.

What is an “insignificant service” for the purposes of conflict of interest disclosure?

The rule does not define an insignificant service other than in relation to other types of services listed. Therefore, best practice would be to disclose any services provided that are not listed as high conflict of interest services and not otherwise specifically exempted.

Does any amount of “insignificant” services create a high conflict of interest?

When disclosing insignificant services, OAR 340-272-0500 (6)(c)(C) asks for an “Explanation of how the amount and nature of work previously performed is such that any member of the verification team’s credibility and lack of bias should not be under question”. So while there is no set amount of insignificant service that automatically triggers high conflict of interest, the amount of services provided still factors in to DEQ’s evaluation. According to the rule, “DEQ may, at its discretion, determine that a high conflict of interest exists when a member of the verification team provided services within the previous five years, but the services were not services that result in a potential for a high conflict of interest according to section (2). If DEQ makes such a determination, it must explain in writing why it believes the work performed creates a high conflict of interest.”

In what situations is an updated conflict of interest form submittal required? In what situations is it not required?

The responsible entity should submit an updated conflict of interest form if:

- It is a new verification year (you can use the same information from last year’s form if nothing has changed)
- There has been any change in organizational structure to the responsible entity or verification body that may introduce new potential conflicts (mergers, acquisitions or divestitures)
- A new person will join the verification team, who was not included on the initial disclosure
- Any other potential conflict of interest situations arise that were not included on the initial disclosure
- Any information on the Notice of Verification Services form has changed since the conflict of interest disclosure was submitted

Conflict of interest must be monitored by both the verification body and the responsible entity for a period of one year following completion of verification, and a new form submitted if new conflicts are introduced during this time.

A new form does not need to be submitted if an individual leaves the verification team.

If a fuel supplier is subject to verification for both the Clean Fuels and Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program, can it use the same verification body for both obligations? What documentation is required?

Fuel suppliers may use the same verification body for both their Clean Fuels and GHG Reporting verification obligations as long as the conflict of interest disclosure form is approved. The verification body will need to submit separate verification statements for each program's verification obligation.

The verification body may use its professional judgement in determining whether to produce separate verification reports in this situation or combine them into a single document. However, in case DEQ requests the verification report, it should be clear:

- When the verification body is referring to a CFP application/report and when it is referring to a GHG report
- That the verification team conducted a separate assessment of material misstatement for each application/reporting type under investigation
- How the verification body reached the conclusion in the verification statement for each application/reporting type

How long do I need to retain records related to verification?

Records related to verification need to be retained on paper or in electronic format for at least seven years after the verification statement is submitted. Records need to be detailed enough to allow for transparent review of how the verification body reached the conclusion in the verification statement, including independent review. At a minimum, you must retain records of: the initial report or fuel pathway application submitted by the responsible entity to DEQ for which you conducted verification, contracts for verification, verification and sampling plans, verification reports, verification statements, and any other materials developed as part of providing and completing the verification.

According to the training materials, the data check must focus on the "most uncertain data." How do you identify the most uncertain data?

This is based on what you are seeing with regard to data quality and collection, your understanding of the regulated entity's recordkeeping systems, and most importantly your professional judgement. For example, if you are on a site visit and the entity looks to have well-calibrated meters but their feedstock receipt system is more manual, with handwritten invoices and changing notations, you would likely assign the latter data a higher level of uncertainty.

What form of proof can the entity provide for accuracy of replacement for missing data? Would a calculation with their substitution method be considered proof of accuracy?

Both the GHG Reporting rules (Section 215) and 3PV rules (Section 272) discuss procedures for missing data. Ideally, the regulated entity would realize the data was missing and discuss this with DEQ, so we can approve an alternate method for the data. If the regulated entity has questions related to missing data, you can direct them to DEQ staff at 3PVerify@deq.oregon.gov.

What is an independent reviewer?

The independent reviewer is a lead verifier within the verification body, but not a part of the verification team. The intent of an independent reviewer is to act as a last check on the verification report, so independent reviewers may not participate in planning or performing verification activities for a report they will review. Subcontractors can be verifiers, but cannot be independent reviewers. An independent reviewer must be an approved lead verifier but does not need to be a sector specific verifier.

Are verifiers-in-training allowed to participate on verification teams in Oregon?

Yes, under the following conditions:

- They are disclosed on the conflict of interest and notice of verification services forms prior to verification
- They are under the direct supervision of the lead verifier at all times
- The verification body meets all other requirements for lead and sector-specific verifiers for the verification services they intend to perform

Can California verifiers-in-training take the Oregon GHG Program training and exams?

According to OAR 340- 272, being accredited as a verifier in California is required before taking Oregon's training and exams. However, verifiers-in-training may participate on a verification team if they are included in the Conflict of Interest and Notification of Verification Services forms and if the verification body meets all the other requirements for lead and sector-specific verifiers for the verification services they intend to perform. In California, experience as part of a verification team as a verifier-in-training counts toward the experience requirements should the trainee later apply for their own accreditation.

Does DEQ need to approve the sampling plan for a verification?

According to OAR 340- 272, agency pre-approval of a sampling plan is not required. However, the sampling plan must be retained according to the recordkeeping requirements of OAR 340-272-0300(3)(d) and must be made available to DEQ upon request.

How will information within the reporting system be provided to verification bodies and to DEQ?

The long-term intent of DEQ is to provide access and information to verifiers electronically through the Your DEQ Online or Oregon Fuels Reporting System platforms, but regardless of the information delivery system, it is the responsibility of the entity to provide relevant information to the verification body. Given the current timelines of DEQ's IT projects, responsible entities may need to manually transfer information in the initial years of the verification program. As new systems and process are implemented, DEQ will provide access and training to verifiers and responsible entities.

Will DEQ publish email addresses of the list of approved verifiers to facilitate networking among verifiers?

DEQ's approved lists of verifiers include the verifier name, employer affiliation, email address, phone number and qualifications.

Will DEQ publish contact information for responsible entities to facilitate marketing for verification? What information for reporters will be available other than the entity name?

DEQ does not publish contact information for responsible entities. A list of registered parties for the Clean Fuels Program is published [here](#), and lists of reporting entities for the GHG Reporting Program are published [here](#).

Are there continuing education requirements for GHG Reporting Program verifiers once they are qualified to perform verification services?

DEQ's verification rules (found in [OAR 340-272](#)) do not require continuing education for lead verifiers. However, the rules do stipulate that the verifier or verification body must notify DEQ in the event of changes related to staffing, accreditation or compliance with Section 272, or if a non-conformance is identified. All Oregon-approved GHG Reporting Program verifiers must maintain accreditation with the California Air Resources Board or ANSI ANAB. They also must update their approval with DEQ every three years by going through the application and approval process. DEQ reserves the right to require additional training of verifiers as frequently as is deemed required for successful implementation of the program.

Questions about verification of emissions data reports:

What are some of the differences between California's Mandatory Reporting Rule (MRR) and the Oregon GHG Reporting Program?

The list below provides some of the key differences, and is not inclusive to all the differences between CARB's MRR and the Oregon GHG Reporting program rules.

With respect to the electricity supplier sector, some key differences are:

- DEQ does not regulate electricity marketers
- DEQ does not regulate wheeled power, exported power or generated power consumed outside the state
- The calculation for facility-specific emission factors differs
- Not all asset-controlling suppliers (ACS) under CARB are considered ACS's under DEQ
- DEQ does not use Renewable Energy Credits-based accounting or use Renewable Portfolio Standard adjustments

With respect to fuel suppliers, a key difference is that Oregon requires reporting both for the Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program (GHGRP) and for the Clean Fuels Program (CFP) through a single reporting system (Oregon Fuels Reporting System) to streamline the reporting process for fuel suppliers regulated under both programs. Since data for these entities is aggregated from CFP reports into GHGRP reports, our system has some additional CFP transaction types and verification of most GHGRP reports will require a working knowledge of the Oregon CFP system.

With respect to natural gas suppliers, Oregon only requires reporting of the total volume of natural gas delivered to end users in Oregon and does not require a breakdown of receipts and deliveries, or volumes put into or removed from storage during the year.

With respect to natural gas systems, Oregon has very limited natural gas production or processing. This limits the scope of industry segments that will require verification.

With respect to process emissions, Oregon contains facilities whose process emissions require the use of subparts G, I, and AA of 40 CFR Part 98. Oregon also contains one facility with foam-blowing operations that uses and Oregon-specific GHG reporting methodology contained in 340-215-0105(6).

For those who would like to verify process emissions in Oregon, what are the relevant process emission sectors?

By subpart from 40CFR Part 98, here are the process emission sectors relevant in Oregon:

Subpart H: Cement Manufacturing

Subpart N: Glass Manufacturing

Subpart Q: Iron and Steel Production

Subpart V: Nitric Acid Production

Subpart G: Ammonia Manufacturing

Subpart I: Electronics Manufacturing

Subpart AA: Pulp and Paper Manufacturing

Foam Blowing (does not have its own EPA subpart methodology; Oregon-specific reporting methodologies found in OAR 340-215-0105(6) are used)

Which version of 40 CFR Part 98 should verifiers use when performing verification?

Oregon's GHG Reporting rules (OAR 340-215) incorporates the provisions of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.), part 98 by reference. Unless otherwise specified, references in this division to 40 C.F.R. part 98 are to those requirements promulgated by EPA and published in the Federal Register on December 9, 2016.

Does Oregon have a cap and trade system?

DEQ's recently adopted [Climate Protection Program](#) contains elements similar to a cap and trade system. Oregon currently does not have a regulation that creates a mandatory carbon market as California does.

Alternative formats

DEQ can provide documents in an alternate format or in a language other than English upon request. Call DEQ at 800-452-4011 or email deqinfo@deq.state.or.us.