

Frequently Asked Questions for Third Party Verification Bodies

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Find answers to commonly asked questions about verification bodies for Oregon's Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program or Clean Fuels Program. 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.

Questions about verification body approval:

How does an organization qualify to become a verification body for Oregon's Clean Fuels Program or Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program?

Verification bodies must have an approved accreditation in order to apply to provide services in Oregon. For the Oregon Clean Fuels Program, the body must have a current accreditation through the California Air Resources Board's [Low Carbon Fuel Standard](#) program. For the Oregon GHG Reporting Program, the body must be accredited through either CARB's [Mandatory Reporting Rule](#) program or through the ANSI National Standards Board's [GHG Validation and Verification Body accreditation program](#).

What information must be provided by the verification body during the application process?

Oregon's Administrative Rule 340-272, which outlines the requirements of the third-party verification program, requires that verification body applications contain the following, in addition to an approved accreditation:

- A list of all verification staff and subcontractors and a description of their duties and qualifications, including DEQ-approved verifiers on staff. The applicant must demonstrate staff qualifications by listing each individual's education, experience, professional licenses, accreditations, status as verifier, lead verifier, or sector specific verifier, and other relevant information. A verification body must retain at least two lead verifiers
- A list of any judicial proceedings, enforcement actions, or administrative actions filed against the verification body within the previous five years, with an explanation as to the nature of the proceedings
- Documentation that demonstrates that the body maintains a minimum of \$4 million of professional liability insurance
- Identification of services provided by the verification body, the industries that the body serves, and the locations where those services are provided A detailed organizational chart that includes the verification body, its management structure, and any related entities
- The verification body's internal conflict of interest policy that identifies activities and limits to monetary or non-monetary gifts that apply to all employees and procedures to monitor potential conflicts of interest

Is there any cost associated with becoming an approved verification body in Oregon?

There are no fees associated with applying to become a verification body in Oregon. There are also no fees associated with applying for, training, or taking exams to become an approved verifier in Oregon.

Questions about DEQ forms:

What verification forms does DEQ require, and who is responsible for submitting them?

Conflict of interest disclosure: Required to be submitted by the verification body and approved by DEQ prior to the start of verification services. For the Clean Fuels Program and liquid fuel suppliers reporting to the GHG Reporting Program, this form is administered through Adobe Sign. The form is available under “Information for Verification Bodies” for the Clean Fuels Program on our 3PV website. For all other Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program regulated entities, the form is administered through Your DEQ Online (YDO).

Notice of verification services form: Required to be submitted to DEQ by the verification body to describe intended verification activities. For the Clean Fuels Program and liquid fuel suppliers reporting to the GHG Reporting Program, this form is administered through Adobe Sign. The form is available under “Information for Verification Bodies” for the Clean Fuels Program on our 3PV website. For all other Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program regulated entities, the form is administered through Your DEQ Online (YDO).

Verification statement: Required to be submitted by the verification body by the verification deadline. For the Clean Fuels Program and liquid fuel suppliers reporting to the GHG Reporting Program, this form is administered through Adobe Sign. The form is available under “Information for Verification Bodies” for the Clean Fuels Program on our 3PV website. 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 all other Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program regulated entities, the form is administered through Your DEQ Online (YDO).

What is the Oregon approval process for Conflict of Interest (COI) and Notice of Verification Services (NOVS) forms?

DEQ will provide agency administrative approval in writing to all involved parties after reviewing and approving completed conflict of interest forms. For the GHG Reporting Program this approval will come as a Your DEQ Online system email notification, and for the Clean Fuels program it will come as an agency email. Approval of the conflict of interest disclosure must be granted before verification activities can begin. DEQ approval of the NOVS form is not required, but DEQ will reach out to verification bodies if there are questions regarding their NOVS submissions.

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?

An updated conflict of interest form should be submitted 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.

In instances where there is a minor update to the NOVS form submission (e.g. a change of site visit date), the verification body may update the form and confirm with DEQ that no other information from either the COI or NOVS form is being changed.

General verification questions:

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

Yes, DEQ will reach out to ensure that the entities that are potentially subject to verification 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 verification require a site visit?

You may refer to this [decision tree](#) to help determine when a full in person site visit is required.

What is less intensive verification, and when does it apply?

Less intensive verification means all services required for full verification, except for site visits, and only requiring data checks and document reviews based on the analysis and risk assessment in the verification body's most recent sampling plan developed as part of the most current full verification. In order to qualify for less intensive verification, the responsible must not have had any changes to operations, emissions or verification body since the previous verification year, and must have received a positive verification statement in the previous verification year. For entities meeting these requirements, less intensive verification requires a full site visit only once every three years.

Are virtual site visits allowable?

DEQ presently does not allow virtual site visits except during less intensive verification years, or as part of more complex verifications where additional site visits are required, once the in person site visit requirement has been met.

Can the same verification body be used to verify information reported to both the CARB Low Carbon Fuel Standard Program and the Oregon CFP? If so, how often must verification bodies be rotated?

Yes. The rotation requirements for verification bodies apply only to Oregon programs. Therefore, a responsible entity may use the verification body they have used in California for six years, beginning with the year of the first Oregon verification.

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?

Yes, the same verification body may be used by the responsible entity for both programs as long as the conflict of interest disclosure form is approved. However, third party verification rules contain rotation requirements for verification bodies. These state that a responsible entity may not use the same verification body for more than six consecutive years and may not engage the same verification body again for three years once the six consecutive years have ended. These limits apply regardless of the program. For example, a responsible entity may use a verification body in 2024 and 2025 for CFP reporting. If they decide to use the same verification body for GHG reporting, they may do so for both programs through 2029, but the earliest they may use the same verification body again would be 2033.

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.

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

Verifiers for the Clean Fuels program and liquid fuel suppliers that report to the GHG Reporting program can access the entity's reporting through the Oregon Fuels Reporting System. For CFP quarterly fuel transaction reports, the verifier is added to the responsible entity's OFRS account by the entity itself to gain access. For CFP annual fuel pathway reporting, DEQ adds up to two representatives of the verification body to the Alternative Fuels Portal to access entity reporting.

For the Greenhouse Gas Reporting program, both reporting and verification are completed through the Your DEQ Online system. The verification body gains access to the entity's submitted report by entering a specific

report ID and security code provided by the system when filling in the COI form. Once the form is approved by DEQ, the link between the verification body's account and the entity's submitted report will be live. Regardless of the information delivery system, it is the responsibility of the entity to provide relevant information to the verification body. DEQ will provide training to verifiers and responsible entities on its reporting systems.

Does DEQ need to approve the sampling plan for verification?

According to OAR Chapter 340, Division 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.

Can a verification body subcontract verification services?

Yes, Oregon's rules allow verification bodies to subcontract verification services, subject to the following requirements:

- The verification body must assume full responsibility for verification services provided by subcontractor verifiers.
- A verification body that engages a subcontractor shall be responsible for demonstrating an acceptable level of conflict of interest, as provided in OAR 340-272-0500, between its subcontractor and the reporting entity for which it will provide verification services.
- A verification body that engages a subcontractor is responsible for ensuring the subcontractor shall not further subcontract or outsource verification services for a reporting entity.
- All subcontractors must apply for and meet the requirements and criteria for DEQ approval under OAR 340-272-0210 and be approved by DEQ under OAR 340-272-0220 in order to provide the verification services for which the subcontractor has been engaged by the verification body.

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. An independent reviewer must be an approved lead verifier but does not need to be a sector specific verifier.

Are there continuing education requirements for 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.

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 CFP training and exams?

According to OAR 340- 272, being accredited as a verifier in California is required before taking Oregon's training and exams. 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.

Can verifiers “upgrade” from verifier to lead verifier or add additional sector-specific approval?

Yes. For verifiers who meet the accreditation requirements for either the GHG Reporting Program or the Clean Fuels Program using a CARB accreditation, the verifier will need to earn the new accreditation with CARB before they may be approved to provide those services in Oregon.

For verifiers who meet the accreditation requirements of the GHG Reporting Program specifically because they are employed by an ANSI ANAB-accredited verification body, the verifier must demonstrate the scope of accreditation the verification body is approved to operate under, and that the verifier has been granted approval for the relevant activities by its verification body.

In the case of process emissions verification for the GHG Reporting Program, DEQ does consider experience when granting approvals. Verifiers must have at least two years of relevant sectoral experience to be approved as a sector-specific verifier for that sector.

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 sectoral approvals.

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 on this page of DEQ's website](#), and [lists of reporting entities for the GHG Reporting Program are also published on this page of DEQ's website](#).

Where can program rules be found?

Rules for the third-party verification program, Clean Fuels Program and GHG Reporting Program are available on the Oregon Secretary of State website. Please only use the Secretary of State website to reference our rules; other sources are not official and may not be updated.

[OAR-340-215](#) contains the requirements of the GHG Reporting Program.

[OAR-340-253](#) contains the requirements of the Clean Fuels Program.

[OAR-340-272](#) contains Oregon's third-party verification requirements.

Where can I find resources and help with the Your DEQ Online system?

Resources and help with Your DEQ Online are available on the [YDO Helpdesk website](#). You can also reach out to our YDO Helpdesk directly at YourDEQOnline@deq.oregon.gov.

Where can I find resources and help with the Oregon Fuels Reporting System?

Registration help, user guides, tutorials and more for the Oregon Fuels Reporting System are available on the [Clean Fuels Program website](#).

Non-discrimination statement

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