



Five Minute Meeting:



Topics: Utility Standard: TD-4171S (Qualifications for Joining Polyethylene Pipe) formerly D-34

Date: 02/15/2023

Audience: Personnel who require qualifications for joining PE pipe, including Company contractors and qualified contractors/subcontractors; personnel who supervise, manage, oversee, or assign work to qualified personnel; and personnel who administer PE connection qualifications (e.g., evaluators and support staff).

Why it matters to you?

This 5MM provides a summary of changes to the Qualification for Joining Polyethylene Pipe document.

What you need to know?

The published date is 2/15/2023 with changes going into effect on May 1st, 2023.

This is a new utility standard with content that was previously found in Gas Design Standard (GDS) D-34, "Qualifications for Joining Polyethylene Pipe." Content changes with this revision include:

- Removed content duplicated in Utility Standard TD-4008S, "Operator Qualification Program Requirements."
- Added training or experience requirement per Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 49, Transportation of Natural and Other Gas by Pipeline: Minimum Federal Safety Standards, Section (§) 192.285, "Plastic pipe: Qualifying persons to make joints."
- Added that the operator qualifications (OQ) evaluator has the authority to stop a qualification test and fail an individual if it is apparent the individual does not have training or experience in the polyethylene (PE) connection procedure.
- Clarified that the PE connection qualification allows the individual to inspect that same PE connection made by others.
- Revised the definition of PE connection qualification intervals to align with the regulatory code requirements (49 CFR §192.285, Subsection [c])
- Referenced Utility Standard TD-4008S for the PE pipeline connection inspection OQ because PE pipeline connection inspection is governed by California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) General Order No. 112-F, "State of California Rules Governing Design, Construction, Testing, Operation, and Maintenance of Gas Gathering, Transmission, and Distribution Piping Systems," and not 49 CFR § 192.285.
- Added requirement to email mailbox for OQ Suspension-Removal-Request in addition to creating corrective action program (CAP) item for a failed leak test.
- Removed requirement for OQ evaluator to contact the individual's supervisor (or employer for Company contractors or qualified contractors/subcontractors [QC/S] personnel) after the individual fails a PE connection qualification attempt.
- Moved all retesting requirements to General Information and added that after the third failed attempt individuals must provide documentation of successful completion of formal PE connection training, before being able to schedule their fourth attempt.

Key discussion points

- Replaced D-34 with New Utility Standard TD-4171S rev 0.
- Revised the definition of PE connection qualification intervals to align with the regulatory code requirements, 49 CFR §192.285, Subsection [c].

"All qualified individuals must re-qualify under the applicable PE connection procedures once each

calendar year at intervals not exceeding 15 months.”

- After the third failed attempt, formal training for company contractors and QC/S is documented on the formal training form in the External Qualification Department's website and uploaded to Industrial Training Services (ITS).
- Added requirement to email OQSuspensionRemovalRequest@pge.com for the OQ suspension and removal request.

FAQs:

Will the new definition of PE connection qualification intervals impact the current qualification?

No changes will be made to the existing plastic qualifications held by an employee. The old definition is essentially the same as the regulatory code requirements in 49 CFR §192.285, Subsection [c].

Where can I obtain the formal training form for contractors?

The formal training form for contractors can be found in the Additional Resources section of the [OQ external qualification department's website](#).

Will the supervisor be notified if their employee fails the OQ exam?

The supervisor will be automatically notified by the system if their employee fails the OQ exam. As a result, there is no longer a need for the evaluator to contact the individual's supervisor after they have failed the OQ exam.

Who do I contact with questions?

Manager, Gas Qualifications - Ronda Shupert (RFSL@pge.com)

OQ Gas Program Manager – Raymond Wong (R3WW@pge.com)

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