

**Department of Environmental Quality
Petroleum Tank Cleanup Section
Petroleum Tank Release Site Closure Update
As of August 18, 2015**

Status of Cleanup Benchmarks set in 75-11-521, MCA (HB 613, 2011).

Benchmark Date	Benchmark (Required Cumulative Resolved Sites)	Actual Resolved Sites
December 31, 2011	45	46
July 1, 2012	90	92
December 31, 2012	135	142
July 1, 2013	180	207
December 31, 2013	225	272
July 1, 2014	270	301
December 31, 2014	315	362
July 1, 2015	360	411

DEQ achieved the total statute required closure numbers. The department has streamlined its process for closure review, and continues to look for opportunities to hasten the process and close more releases. Additionally, the 2015 legislature approved amendments to the Petroleum Mixing Zone (PMZ) closure statute, which will assist DEQ in closing more releases. DEQ is actively approaching property owners to discuss the applicability of a PMZ closure at their respective petroleum releases. Release closure will remain a top performance priority for DEQ.

The 2015 Orphan Share authorized in SB96 and appropriated in the FY16-17 biennium will assist DEQ with cleanup and getting releases to closure. We are certain that spending will be reflected in the closure numbers. Many sites identified for Orphan Share funding will also be eligible for reimbursement from the Petroleum Tank Release Cleanup Fund (PTRCF). Provisions in SB-355, the Montana Petroleum Brownfields Revitalization Act, allow these Orphan Share funds to more readily count toward the co-pay requirements of the PTRCF. Sites that need more cleanup than what can be achieved in one field season will be added to the liability of the PTRCF. The releases that need significant cleanup require far more funding than the PTRCF can realistically provide in the short-term under its cash flow.

The following figure depicts how DEQ's focuses on closures and program reorganization in 2007 have impacted the total number of open releases. Total active releases peaked in 2007 at 1597, and as of August 3, 2015, these have been reduced to 1,209 open releases. The lower lines (red and green) depict how the number of releases that were reported and closed each year since the inception of the program. The two detectible peaks in confirmed releases reflect EPA

mandates for tank and system improvements that created a significant influx release discoveries. DEQ was in reactive mode and did not have the resources (time, money, and/or personnel) to stay ahead of the releases. We are now in a period where we close approximately three releases per year for each new one confirmed.

