

RISK SIMPLIFIED

RESOURCES:

- [Cal/OSHA Pressure Vessel Unit](#)
- [Cal/OSHA Pressure Vessel Registration Database](#)
- [Title 8 CCR Sections 450-560 Unfired Pressure Vessel Safety Orders](#)
- [Title 8 CCR Sections 750-797 Boiler and Fired Pressure Vessel Safety Orders](#)

QUESTIONS:

[Email PRISM Risk Control](#)

or call 916.850.7300

Pressure Vessel Inspections

By Sarah Bruno, ARM

Pressure vessels are containers designed to hold pressurized gases and liquids that must be maintained and tested periodically. Ensuring these pieces of equipment are functioning properly is important, not only to extend service life but also for employee safety.

The Cal/OSHA Pressure Vessel Unit is responsible for issuing permits and overseeing the inspection of boilers (any fired or unfired pressure vessel used to generate steam pressure by the application of heat) and tanks (any fired or unfired pressure vessel used for the storage of air pressure or liquefied petroleum gases).

Below you will find information on the 3 types of vessels that California requires to be inspected and permitted, including inspection frequency:

- Boilers
 - Greater than 15 pounds per square inch gauge (PSIG) steam
 - Inspect 2 times each year (one internal, one external)
- Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LP-Gas) Tanks
 - Greater than 125 gallon capacity
 - Inspect every 5 years (transportation tanks and storage tanks)
 - Inspect every 3 years (when used to dispense to other tanks)
- Air Tanks
 - Greater than 1 ½ cubic feet volume OR over 150 PSI
 - Inspect every 5 years (stationary installations)
 - Inspect every 3 years (portable)



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Inspections shall be performed by a Cal/OSHA Pressure Vessel Unit Inspector or a certified inspector employed as such by an insurance company. Inspectors must pass an examination to be issued a certificate of competency by the Division to do this work.

The Pressure Vessel Unit maintains a database for all permitted vessels. Each vessel must be stamped with a state serial number, which is the permanent means of identification for inspection and permit purposes. Air tank serial numbers begin with an 'A', boilers begin with a 'B', and liquefied petroleum gas tanks begin with an 'L'.

Agencies should determine which, if any, vessels require permits to operate, and then ensure the inspections and corresponding permits are current. A valid permit to operate must be posted in a suitable protective container secured to the unit or nearby so that it is available at all times.

For additional assistance or questions regarding pressure vessels, please [contact](#) PRISM's Risk Control Department.