

EFTCO Food Safety Initiative

EFTCO announces an update and improvement of the questionnaire for the EFTCO Food Assessment.

EFTCO added the latest developments in the field of food safety improving the EFTCO Food Assessment Questionnaire, which was last updated in 2018.

Approx. 300 EFTCO Food Assessments were carried out by tank cleaning stations, because, in addition to their SQAS assessment, they are focused on food also.

An EFTCO Food Assessment is always to be seen as a supplement to the SQAS Assessment, as it should be avoided to repeat the questions from the SQAS Assessment in other audits. This to create effective use of synergies.

The EFTCO Food Assessment is therefore considered a synergy and a good addition to the SQAS Assessment for the members of EFTCO, cleaning food tanks also.

EFTCO Food assessed Tank Cleaning Stations can publish the results of their assessment on the EFTCO website where they are available for the industry, to evaluate the technical capabilities and quality of their tank cleaning partners.

Thus, both the food industry and the involved transport companies can carry out an evaluation of their logistics partners tailored to their individual needs.

The 2023 questionnaire was compiled with the support of EFTCO's partners from the food industry, specialized in the field of food safety and supplier auditing.

The updated questionnaire contains about 130 questions in the field of:

- ✓ Food Safety & Quality System
- ✓ General Organization for the cleaning stations
- ✓ Work Processes
- ✓ Validation
- ✓ Personnel

The EFTCO Food Assessment is closely linked to existing HACCP concepts, the FSSC22000 standard and all known standards and quality requirements from the food industry.

All EFTCO associated cleaning stations are authorized for the usage of cleaning documentation with the EFTCO Cleaning Document (ECD), in compliance with the defined rules for use. (pages 4-10)

Introduction

The “European Federation of Tank Cleaning Organisations (EFTCO)” was founded 1993 with the main aim to organize tank cleaning in safe and environmental responsible way all over Europe.

EFTCO represents 21 national associations covering 27 European countries and able to achieve a network of ca. 640 cleaning stations

EFTCO is a 'non-profit' association committed to reliable, trustworthy and environmental friendly services of its members.

EFTCO works together with interested parties on matters of Safety, Environment, Education and Technical improvements to develop a better understanding and practice in tank cleaning.

EFTCO has cooperation with European Federations like the European Chemicals Council (CEFIC), the European Chemical Transport Association (ECTA), the International Tank Container Organisation (ITCO).

The activity is underpinned by the EFTCO Cleaning Document (ECD). EFTCO owns the exclusive copyright of the EFTCO Cleaning Document recorded under the European trademark registration nr. 016236614.

The ECD is used by the cleaning companies to record in a multi lingual format the services completed. The ECD has unique numbering to provide traceable provenance by EFTCO's Members of any legitimate ECD.

In 2023, 30 years after foundation, EFTCO moved their place of location from UK to Belgium to follow our approach of being a European association, based in a country belonging to the EU.

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EFTCO Food Assessment

Food safety is one of the most important matters for EFTCO's Members.

As part of the Food logistics chain, EFTCO and their associated cleaning stations know about their responsibility for food safety and food defence. The tank cleanings involved in food and food related transports have to fulfil high quality standards of the industry.

With 21 national associations covering 27 European countries in addition to 2 global members in Israel and Brazil EFTCO spans a huge network of 680 cleaning stations that oblige to carry out this service as professional and reliable partners.

We hold our members to high standard and to establish the best quality for customers more than 130 questions need to be constantly answered in our quality audit assessments related to cleaning food tanks only.

During the compilation of this questionnaire the fact had to be taken into consideration that there are insufficient legal requirements for foodstuff cleaning. So the aim was to achieve a practical solution, in which the interests of all parties i.e. the loading industry, the transport companies and the tank cleaning stations are taken into consideration.

As the requirements of food cleaning may have local and industrial differences, the assessment results are published to the industry. The quality evaluation can be done individually under observation of the individual industry's demand. We offer as many information for this as possible and are proud that more than 300 cleaning stations participated in the EFTCO Food Assessment by the end of 2022.



A complete EFTCO Food Assessment consists of 3 parts:

1. SQAS core with general management, quality and safety questions
2. SQAS tank cleaning with general tank cleaning questions
3. EFTCO Food Assessment questionnaire with food specific questions

The results can be accessed on our Cleaning Stations Website:
<http://www.eftco.org/depots>.

Independent and approved assessors guarantee a high-quality information, as only qualified and approved assessors are nominated to execute those assessments. Cleaning Stations that have taken the questionnaire and were assessed by these professionals are allowed by EFTCO to use the EFTCO Food Assessed Logo.

Rules for issuing EFTCO Cleaning Documents (ECD)

1. Introduction

The uniform EFTCO Cleaning Document (ECD) has been developed by EFTCO, in cooperation with ECTA and Cefic, in order to satisfy the needs of cleaning stations, transport companies and chemical, feed and food manufacturing companies.

The use of a uniform European EFTCO document has important advantages for all parties involved:

- The document has the same form which can easily be distinguished from the falsifications.
- The use of a unique numbering system provides security and authentication traceable against fraudulent misuse of the cleaning documents.
- The fact that the same information is always in the same place on the cleaning document will facilitate its use by operators at loading points, by drivers etc.
- The use of the EFTCO Tank Cleaning Codes will make it easy for everybody to identify and understand which cleaning operations have been carried out to clean the tank.
- The EFTCO Tank Cleaning Codes are currently available in many European languages.

This provides a clear understanding of the cleaning document information for all users of throughout Europe.

2. General statements: copyright and permit for use

EFTCO owns the exclusive copyright of the EFTCO Cleaning Document recorded under the European trademark registration nr. 016236614. The National Cleaning Association (Associations) which are the Members of EFTCO identified on www.eftco.org, are authorized by EFTCO to permit the use of ECD to the registered Cleaning Stations, on condition that all rules and terms laid down by EFTCO are met. These terms may change from time to time at EFTCO's sole discretion.

The Cleaning Station is responsible for following the rules stated here. In case of any misuse, the National Cleaning Association may suspend or withdraw the right for a Cleaning Station to use the ECD.

3. Definitions and foundations

The EFTCO definition of 'clean':

“A tank shall be described as clean when there are no visible traces or odour of the last product or cleaning agent following an inspection from the man-lids”.

The ECD 'definition of clean' is set by inspection at the end of the cleaning process. The operator of the tank or its appointed (e.g. driver, ...) is invited to confirm this state and request further actions when necessary.

A standard tank cleaning is the cleaning of the last product transported in the tank as declared to the cleaning station and recorded on the ECD. By mutual agreement parties may agree to clean a tank from its last carried product and to prepare a tank for loading of the next cargo. In that case parties will agree specific complementary cleaning work to be carried out in order to achieve the required cleanliness. This may also require additional and special inspection services. When cleaning services are carried out to the specifications of the customer, with an inspection that is different from the EFTCO definition of 'clean', this should be recorded in box 11 'Comments'.

The work carried out in the cleaning station must be declared on the ECD, using the correct EFTCO codes. The cleaning station will not edit this at the request of the customer or for any other purpose.

No length of validity is given for an ECD!

An ECD cannot be issued for a visual / odour inspection (T01), if the tank was not cleaned by the same cleaning site. ECD's with code T01 only are not allowed and seen as invalid.





A tank can be re-inspected at the moment of pick up by a driver when there is a doubt this tank still meets the EFTCO definition of clean at that moment.

When this inspection indicates the tank is still meeting this definition, the code T01 combined with the date and time of this inspection is put in box 11 of the ECD.

When the ECD was already printed and cannot be modified, a stamp of the cleaning station with code T01, date, time and the signature of the cleaning station can be put on the printed ECD.

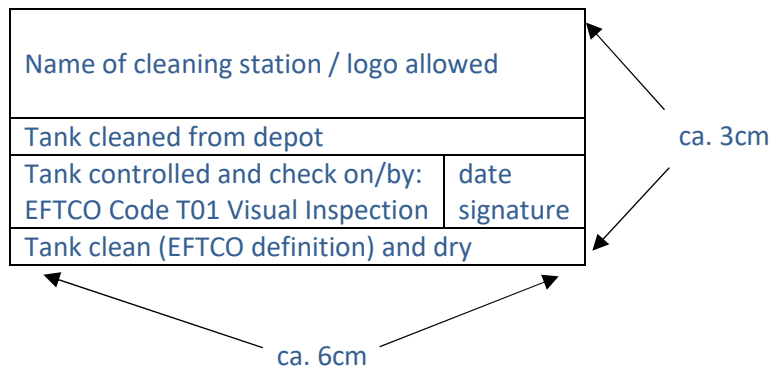
This stamp needs to have the following information:

Name of cleaning installation (or logo)

-  EFTCO Code T01 "Visual inspection"
-  Date
-  Time
-  Signature of Inspector

A sample of the stamp format and content needs to be approved and archived by the national association on behalf of EFTCO before they are allowed to be used.

Prescribed contents and formats of the T-01 inspection stamp



Example



When the visual inspection shows that additional actions are needed to meet the EFTCO definition of clean, these additional actions and the date and time when they were done must be added in box 10 of the original ECD. When the ECD was already printed, a new ECD must be issued adding all cleaning details of the first cleaning together with the additional actions carried out afterwards. The initial first ECD must be declared as invalid and not being handed out to customer. The time for the end of cleaning is the initial end of cleaning time of the first ECD and the time/date for additional actions must be added in box 10.

4. Specific ECD information

4.1. Description of the ECD boxes.

The cleaning station needs to complete the ECD as follows:

Box1	Name, website address and telephone number of the tank cleaning station	mandatory
Box2	Customer reference number	optional
Box3	Serial number or order number of the cleaning station	optional
Box4	Name and address of the customer (contracting party). The customer code can be added if available. In case the company is not known, the name of the driver should be indicated	mandatory
Box5	Identification numbers of the vehicle and of the tank, container or IBC	mandatory
Box6	Indication of the nature of the product: liquid / solid / chemical / food	optional
Box7	Identification of the next load to be carried	optional
Box8	<p>Identification of the previous load (per compartment): mandatory information in order to meet the legal requirements concerning the provision of appropriate product safety information at the work floor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For dangerous goods: UN number and proper shipping name, trade name or chemical name; for non-dangerous goods: trade name or chemical name. 	mandatory
Box9	<p>Description of the cleaning work that has been carried out (per compartment), using only the EFTCO Tank Cleaning Codes and the corresponding descriptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identification of what has been cleaned with success: tanks (compartments) cleaning agents that have been used cleaning procedures that have been used tests that have been carried out handling of waste extras 	mandatory

Box10	<p>Additional services that were carried out, per compartment as well as cleaning of accessories (hoses, pumps, outlets,...) if carried out.</p> <p>For hoses the identification numbers of the cleaned hoses should be indicated if available.</p>	optional
Box11	<p>Comments from the cleaning station.</p> <p>If the client wants to have a tank cleaned in function of the next load, this should be mentioned in this box (in this case box 7 must be completed).</p> <p>If the client wants to have additional service which cannot be described by the cleaning codes, this service shall be added here. It is also agreed in EFTCO that it will be mentioned in Box 11 that a tank has been cleaned under the special demand of the customer as the indication that the tank under this conditions is not able to be loaded without any restrictions.</p>	optional
Box12	Name of person who carried out the cleaning (cleaner)	optional
Box13	<p>Date and time of registration upon arrival (Time in)</p> <p>Date and time of the end of the cleaning operation (Time out)</p> <p>The cleaning station is obliged to put the end date and time of cleaning immediately after the tank left the cleaning bay.</p> <p>Conditions using the following wording "The cleaning station and the driver confirm that the above service(s) to clean the tank have been carried out (see EFTCO definition of 'clean')."</p>	optional mandatory
Box14	Name and signature of person in the cleaning station who has controlled the cleaning	mandatory
Box15	Name and signature of driver	optional

- The document shall be completed by the cleaning station using a printer connected to a computer system. Either matrix or laser printers can be used.
- In case handwritten changes have been made on a printed cleaning document, the document shall be considered as **invalid** with following exceptions:
 - ➔ in case a stamp is used for a visual inspection as stated under chapter 3 of these rules, the requested information may be completed by hand.
 - ➔ In case of failure of the computer system or the printer, it is allowed to complete the cleaning document manually. In this case all boxes need to be completed, providing the same information as if it would be printed. The handwriting shall be easily legible. Under comments (Box 11) the reason for the manual completion shall be clearly explained. A stamp identifying the cleaning station shall be put on the document that has been manually completed, in order to certify its authenticity.

4.2. Last product declaration

The cleaning station shall require from its customer to correctly declare the last product for each tank compartment that has to be cleaned. This product declaration is an important part of the contract and the basis for the cleaning station to undertake a safe and legal operation. The product as declared by the customer must be shown on the ECD, for each compartment of the tank. Any alterations to these products are considered falsification.

(It is recommended the cleaning station uses methods such as the CMR to check the correct product declaration. If no CMR is available this can be mentioned in Box 11.)

4.3. ECD Layout

The cleaning station shall use the form and the layout that EFTCO defined and made available for usage. EFTCO reserves the right to modify the standards and to introduce changes as it finds necessary for additional security or other purposes.

4.4. Cleaning performer

An ECD cannot be issued unless substantial work by the trained and educated employee of the cleaning station has been done. The work done has to be declared correctly on the ECD using the approved EFTCO Codes.

On clear agreement, by exception, when part of the work is carried out by the tank operator's agent (driver) then this is to be undertaken without any liability by the cleaning station. Instruction may be required and provided in the use of the cleaning station equipment. If part of the work is carried out by persons other than the cleaning stations staff, this should be declared accordingly in box 11 of the ECD.

4.5. ECD colours

The cleaning stations distribute the copies of the ECD as follows:

- white copy (original): for the next loading point (via driver);
- yellow copy: for the driver;
- blue copy: for the cleaning station (to be kept);
- green copy (optional): to be sent with the invoice to the customer/transport company.

4.6. Non-transferable

ECDs are not transferable between cleaning companies. ECDs must remain traceable to the cleaning station. Any unused and excess ECDs must be returned to the National Cleaning Association.

4.7. ECD archiving

The cleaning station shall retain the original blue copy of the ECD issued for three years as a minimum. The same three years are the retaining period for the incomplete or void ECDs.

EFTCO requires all Members and affiliated stations to retain details of ECD issued for traceability and to manage the details as confidential.

4.8. ECD governance

The cleaning station shall always accept that the permission to issue ECDs is governed on behalf of EFTCO by the National Cleaning Association relevant to the site. This also governs the transfer of electronic data relating to otherwise printed ECDs.

4.9. Improper use

If the cleaning station gets to know **any improper uses** or actions that distort the ECD this shall be reported to the National Association with all proofs and documents available. Such fraud could be, but is not limited to:

- unauthorized use of the EFTCO identity;
- breaches of ECD copyright;
- altering ECD documents;
- incorrect product declaration;
- issuing blank or incomplete ECD.

Fraudulent activities are taken seriously. This can result in sanctions across all EFTCO affiliated cleaning stations, legal action, and financial penalty. Information about such incidents will be published and shared with other partners in the supply chain including Trade Associations such as ECTA and CEFIC.