

BQ-9000 Policy 5.0

Idled Production Plants

Rev.2, Date 1-21-10

Page 1 of 2

Definitions

Category I Shutdown: The facility is not producing product but the quality management system is still being followed and maintained and the quality management representative (QMR), biodiesel plant manager, and possibly the lead operator all retain their positions.

Category II Shutdown: The facility is not producing product, the quality management system is not being followed and maintained, or the entity has been under Category I for greater than 180 days. The QMR and the plant manager are still part of the organization but are on other assignments.

Category III Shutdown: The facility is not producing product and the quality management system is not being followed and maintained. The QMR and/or plant manager are no longer part of the biodiesel operations.

Background

BQ-9000 certification is granted for a period of three years and may be renewed. However, a company undergoes annual surveillance audits to verify that they are maintaining and using their quality management system. The National Biodiesel Accreditation Commission (NBAC) assumes that BQ-9000 companies are actively producing biodiesel and operating within the scope of their quality management system.

Nevertheless, a BQ-9000 Producer may choose to shut down or idle their plant for an extended period of time due to any number of factors like poor economic conditions, major plant retooling or labor issues. The questions that arise from this temporary change in operating status are “How does a plant shutdown or idling affect a company’s BQ-9000 status?” and “Are there any requirements for restarting the production facility?”

Plant shutdowns may affect plant staffing, quality management system maintenance and employee familiarity with the system. As a result, the effectiveness of the company’s quality management system may be impacted. Therefore, the Commission has outlined the following quality management system restarting verification requirements for a production facility after a shutdown. These requirements are based upon the shutdown category classification.

Guidance

Category I Shutdown:

A company that maintains their Category I Shutdown for less than 180 days but greater than 30 days shall complete the following requirements.

- During the shutdown period the company maintains product and tank testing requirements outlined in the quality management system;
- After the 90th day they shall test stored product for all critical parameters prior to shipment;
- Prior to startup they shall hold an abbreviated Quality Management Review Meeting to focus on the startup issues such as refresher training, sampling and testing. All affected personnel shall have had refresher training;

BQ-9000 Policy 5.0

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Rev.2, Date 1-21-10

Page 2 of 2

- If the organization has been in a Category 1 Shutdown for at least ninety days, within sixty days after startup the company shall hold an internal audit to verify the effectiveness of the quality system;
- A full quality management review meeting shall be then held within 30 days after the internal audit;
- NBAC shall receive notification of this classification.

No on-site NBAC Audit is required at the time of start-up and their BQ-9000 status is maintained. Future Surveillance audits shall be scheduled within a year from the subsequent external audit. After 180 days of no producing activity, the company's BQ-9000 status is suspended.

Category II Shutdown:

- BQ-9000 status is suspended;
For entities interested in eventual recertification, the following must be adhered to:
- Prior to shipping stored product from their tanks, the biodiesel shall be sampled and tested for all critical parameters;
- Prior to startup they shall hold a Quality Management Review Meeting to focus on the startup issues such as refresher training, sampling and testing. All affected personnel shall have had refresher training;
- Within sixty days after startup the company shall hold an internal audit to verify the effectiveness of the quality system;
- Another quality management review meeting shall be held within 30 days after the internal audit;
- An external audit shall be scheduled within 180 days of startup;
- NBAC shall receive notification of this classification.

The next Surveillance Audit shall be scheduled within a year from the date of this new external audit.

Category III Shutdown:

- BQ-9000 status is revoked.