

Frequently Asked Questions About CAERS User Permissions, User Registration and Electronic Signature Agreement

Q: Do I need a computer in order to use CAERS?

A: Anyone using CAERS must have (1) access to a computer; (2) Internet access; (3) a valid e-mail address; and (4) authorization by the company to edit and/or certify air emissions data.

Q: What's the difference between a Facility Preparer and a Facility Certifier?

A: The Facility Preparer is the role in CAERS that is responsible for entering the emissions data. The Facility Certifier is the role in CAERS that is responsible for certifying and submitting the data. Think of the Facility Preparer as the person who enters the annual throughput data and selects the emission factors and calculation methods. The Facility Certifier is the person who signs your facility's certification statements.

Q: Can one person be both the Facility Preparer and the Facility Certifier?

A: Yes. In many Maine facilities, the jobs of creating the emissions inventory and certifying and submitting the inventory are done by the same person. If you will be both the Facility Preparer and the Facility Certifier, fill out Part 1 of the CAERS User Registration and Digital Signature Agreement and check the box at the very bottom of the page (Would you like the Facility Certifier to be registered as a Facility Preparer for the facility?). You will not need to fill out anything in Part 2 on the back of the form.

Q: Why does the User Registration and Electronic Signature Agreement have to be notarized?

A: CAERS has been constructed to comply with EPA's electronic reporting regulations (40 CFR Parts 3, 9, 51 *et al.*). One of EPA's requirements is that Maine DEP identity-proof registrants who use electronic signatures. While there are several possible solutions, Maine DEP has chosen notarization at the time of the Facility Certifier signature as our identity-proofing method.

Q: We use a consultant to prepare our emissions inventory. Can the consultant complete the User Registration and Electronic Signature Agreement?

A: A consultant cannot complete this form without your cooperation. Every facility must have a Facility Certifier – someone employed by the company who is the official responsible for submitting and certifying the annual air emissions inventory. A consultant who prepares your emissions inventory should be listed as a Facility Preparer, never as the Facility Certifier.

Q: What if I have concerns with one or more points in the User Registration and Digital Signature Agreement?

A: The certification language in Section 2 has been taken nearly word for word from the certification form which Maine DEP has been using since 2005. Section 3 is your recognition of the equivalency of digital signatures with "wet ink" signatures. Sections 4 and 5 are your acknowledgements that you must safeguard and not misuse your CAERS authority. 06-096 CMR Chapter 137, Section 4(A) requires facilities to certify their annual air emissions inventory. CAERS combines the certification and submission process in one final step.

Q: Can I fax or e-mail the completed form back to Maine DEP?

A: No, we must have the ink signature of the Facility Certifier on file. Please return completed forms to: CAERS Administrator, Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Air Quality, 17 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333-0017.