

November 2014

Re: Heating Oil Information

Dear Municipal Officials:

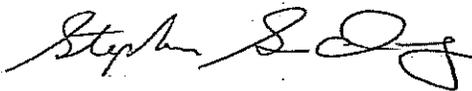
Following the enclosed statewide press release from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the Southeast Regional Office (SERO) put together a heating oil information packet to assist municipal officials, contractors, and homeowners in your municipality during the upcoming heating oil season. In this packet DEP provides:

- Tips for Residential Heating oil Tank Owners fact sheet including a self-inspection checklist.
- Home Heating Oil Releases guidance that describes steps to take following a release.
- Notice of Contamination form, which needs to be filled out and sent to the regional office following a release.
- Emergency Response Contractors List and disclaimer.
- Soil Sampling Heating Oil Tank Excavations, which supersedes the sampling protocol in the enclosed closure guidance.
- Underground Storage Tank Heating Oil Cleanup Grant form.
- Closure Requirements for Underground Storage Tank technical document provides helpful information regarding sampling parameters, cleanup standards, waste disposal, and a closure report form to assist in documenting closure activities for underground or aboveground storage tanks. This document can be found at the following link:
<http://www.elibrary.dep.state.pa.us/dsweb/Get/Document-92199/263-4500-601.pdf>

We suggest that you hand out this packet with any permits for heating oil tank removals. Feel free to make copies as needed and to provide this information to any resident with a home heating oil tank. All of these documents except the Emergency Response Contractors List are available on DEP's webpage.

SERO is creating a heating oil tank presentation for municipal officials, fire departments, consultants, and contractors. If you are interested in participating in this training, or if you have any questions regarding the enclosed packet, please contact Dana Kutz at 484.250.5770.

Sincerely,



Stephan Sinding
Regional Manager
Environmental Cleanup and Brownfields

RECEIVED
PENN TOWNSHIP
260 Lewis Road, West Grove, PA 19380

DEC 01 2014

Enclosure

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

Dept. of Environmental Protection
Commonwealth News Bureau
Room 308, Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg PA., 17120

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

09/3/2014

CONTACT:

Amanda Witman, Department of Environmental Protection
717-787-1323

DEP Reminds Citizens of Important Autumn Advisories

Owners of Swimming Pools and Home Heating Oil Tanks Should Take Caution

HARRISBURG -- Autumn is less than a month away and DEP would like to remind citizens about important precautions to take as they are closing their pools and filling their home heating oil tanks. Pool wastewater, if not disposed of properly, can contaminate local waterways, while poorly maintained home heating oil tanks can leak.

When chlorinated water is drained from a swimming pool into a storm sewer, it can quickly make its way to a stream or other body of water, where aquatic life can be damaged or killed.

The discharge of swimming pool water to local waterways without a permit is a violation of the Clean Streams Law. Property owners and pool companies must obtain a permit from their local municipality before disposing of any pool wastewater. This includes pool backwash water, neutralized pool cleaning wastewater and standing water.

Pool wastewater should be discharged into the local sanitary sewer system, if possible. If sanitary sewers are not available, the wastewater should be hauled off-site for disposal at an approved treatment facility or otherwise discharged according to the department's Swimming Pool Wastewater Discharge Guidelines.

Owners of home heating oil tanks should consider inspecting indoor and outdoor home heating oil tanks for potential problems prior to refilling them. Preventing leaks will save owners energy and money, in addition to protecting owners' health.

Leaking heating oil can cause indoor air problems and potentially contaminate groundwater and private drinking water wells. A spill cleanup can cost up to \$50,000 and may not be covered by homeowner's insurance. Residents who think their oil tank may have a problem should immediately contact their oil company for help.

A quarter of all Pennsylvania homes use heating oil to stay warm in the winter.

DEP encourages homeowners to consider these tips:

- For safety reasons, always assume the tank contains at least some oil;
- Routinely inspect the exterior of the tank and all attached equipment;
- Check for signs of rusting on the tank and its structural supports;
- Examine the tank's fill line and feed line to the furnace for leaks;
- Never tip over or empty a tank onto the ground;
- Enlist a professional to perform maintenance or alterations to a heating oil tank system; and
- Recognize that wet spots or odors near the tank may signal a problem.

When fuel is delivered, make certain that the home address is clearly visible and the tank's fill line clearly marked. If a resident cannot be home when fuel oil is delivered, mark the fill pipe with a red flag or marker and inform the oil company of the location. Ensure that any disconnected fill pipes that remain above the ground are permanently sealed and cannot be opened.

For more information, or to view the Swimming Pool Wastewater Guidelines, visit www.dep.state.pa.us keyword: pool wastewater.

For more information about filling a home heating oil tank, visit www.dep.state.pa.us keyword: Storage Tanks, or call DEP's Division of Storage Tanks at 717-772-5599.

TIPS FOR RESIDENTIAL HEATING OIL TANK OWNERS

Residential heating oil tanks are tanks that store fuel oil to provide space heating on premises where they are located. With proper tank management, spills and leaks can be avoided. Leaking tanks can contaminate public and private drinking water supplies, pollute soils, create the potential for fires and explosions, and subject tank owners to very expensive cleanup costs. A typical cleanup cost for spills and overfills from heating oil tanks ranges from \$10,000 to \$50,000 and is often not covered by typical homeowner's insurance policies.

How can heating oil tanks be protected from spills and overfills?

1. **ROUTINELY INSPECT THE EXTERIOR OF AN ABOVEGROUND TANK AND ALL ATTACHED EQUIPMENT.** Many times, leaks can easily be detected and corrected before extensive environmental damage occurs. Tanks and equipment should be inspected for uniform corrosion, pitting, holes, leaking pipes, loose joints and loose fittings. Be aware that most corrosion failures occur from water sitting at the bottom of the tank. Tanks rust from the inside out. **A freshly painted tank doesn't mean that it is structurally sound!**

Tanks can collapse when the tank legs rust or when the soil underneath settles due to the freezing and thawing cycle. To prevent collapses, tanks and equipment should be frequently inspected for structural soundness, such as weak or unsteady support legs. Tanks should be installed on a concrete pad and be secured with floor flanges and concrete anchors. Never place an aboveground tank directly on the soil. **Remember, a 275-gallon tank full of heating oil weighs over one ton.** Tanks need to be installed in a secure area, away from vehicular traffic, and be protected from high winds and any potential falling objects such as tree limbs, snow, ice, etc., that could damage the tank or break the attached equipment.

2. **INSTALL SPILL AND OVERFILL PREVENTION DEVICES.** Spills and overfills occur when product is delivered to the tank. There are simple and generally inexpensive devices that can be installed on tanks to prevent this from occurring. The product distributor can advise the tank owner about available devices.
3. **ENSURE THE TANK ADDRESS IS CLEARLY VISIBLE AND THE FILL LINE IS CLEARLY MARKED.** This is extremely important for multi-family dwellings and in areas where dwellings are located close together. Many spills and overfills have resulted from deliveries made to the wrong tank.
4. **CONSIDER A SECONDARY CONTAINMENT STRUCTURE.** If a release from the tank does occur, the easiest way to limit the liability is to capture and contain the entire release before it enters the environment. Double-walled underground tanks, diked aboveground tanks, and retrofit structures for existing aboveground tanks are readily available. A product distributor can advise tank owners on various options.

Is it important to remove the fill pipe when a tank is removed?

Yes. There are numerous documented cases of heating oil being delivered through fill pipes for basement tanks that no longer exist. Some simple steps to avoid this costly mistake include: 1) Remove the fill line after the removal of the tank; 2) If the fill line cannot be removed, then permanently seal both ends of the fill pipe; 3) Contact the oil delivery company and inform them that the tank has been removed and that under no circumstances should a delivery be made to the tank.

Self-Inspection Checklist for Basement and Backyard Aboveground Home Heating Oil Tanks (ASTs)

If the answer is "YES" to any of the following questions, call an oil burner technician for a more detailed inspection and corrective measures.

- Are the tank legs unstable or on a precarious foundation?
- Is the tank vent clogged or restricted because of ice, snow or insect nests? (Screened vents can prevent insect nest problems.)
- Are there any signs of rust, weeps, wet spots or excessive dents on the tank's surface?
- Is the overfill whistle silent when the tank is being filled? (Ask your delivery person.)
- Are there any drips or signs of leakage around the filter or valves?
- Are there signs of spills around the fill pipe or the vent pipe?
- Do the oil lines between the tank and the furnace run either under concrete or aboveground without being encased in protective tubing?
- Is the fuel-level gauge cracked, stuck or frozen...or are there signs of oil around it?
- Is there danger of snow or ice falling on the tank?
- Are you using more oil than normal?

Self-Inspection Checklist for Home Heating Oil Underground Storage Tanks (USTs)

If the answer is "YES" to any of the following questions, call an oil burner technician for a more detailed inspection and corrective measures.

- Are you using more fuel than normal?
- Is the tank vent clogged or restricted because of ice, snow or insect nests? (Screened vents can prevent insect nest problems.)
- Is the tank taking on water - a rise in water level greater than 1/2" for an 8- to 12-hour period? (An oil-burner technician can check for water or provide the owner with water-finding paste to check themselves.)
- Is the overfill whistle silent when the tank is being filled? (Ask a delivery person.)

Are there indicators that a residential heating oil tank might be leaking or product has been spilled?

Yes. There are many indicators, including:

- Soil is saturated with heating oil;
- Soil or other surface material around the fill pipe is stained;
- Product vapors are in the soils or in the basement area;
- Fuel is seeping into a basement, stream, underground utility, etc.;
- Drinking water supplies are contaminated;
- Fuel consumption has suddenly increased;
- Furnace is operating erratically; and
- Neighbors are complaining of fuel oil odors.

What should be done if a residential heating oil tank leaks?

- ✓ Contact the DEP immediately. It is the responsibility of the tank/property owner to notify the appropriate DEP regional office of the location and extent of the release. A list of DEP regional offices is shown below.
- ✓ Identify the source of the release. If you can't find the source, you may need to contact a professional to test the tank and/or piping system to locate the area of the release.
- ✓ Stop or contain the release. Absorbent material like cat litter can help stop the release from spreading. Call a professional, such as your product distributor, to remove as much product from the tank as necessary to prevent further release.
- ✓ Begin cleanup. Contact professionals to help determine the extent of contamination, prepare a cleanup plan and clean up the site. The cost and quality of work can vary greatly. For information on how to hire contractors, refer to the DEP Storage Tank Cleanup Program's Fact Sheet, "Leaking Underground Storage Tanks: Controlling Cleanup Costs." Owners may want to first notify their private insurance company before hiring a contractor to see if any cleanup costs are covered. Furthermore, some insurance companies want to approve a contractor first as part of their policies. Remember, it is the responsibility of the tank/property owner to initiate and complete all necessary corrective action measures. For more information on the DEP's cleanup standards, please contact the appropriate DEP regional office.
- ✓ Keep detailed and accurate records. It is very important to keep records of cleanup action plans and actions taken.
- ✓ Help may be available. The DEP has a reimbursement program for tank owners who have underground storage tanks with a capacity of 3,000 gallons or less used for storing heating oil for consumption on the premises where stored to assist with costs of taking corrective action in response to a release. The release must have occurred on or after Jan. 30, 1998. Full details, instructions and the application form are available at the following website: www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/cleanup_program/14100/underground_heating_oil_tank_cleanup_reimbursement_grant_program/589716.

Regional DEP Offices:

Northwest Region

230 Chestnut St.
Meadville, PA 16335-3481
814-332-6648

Counties: Butler, Clarion, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, Jefferson, Lawrence, McKean, Mercer, Venango and Warren

North-central Region

208 West 3rd St., Suite 101
Williamsport, PA 17701-6448
570-327-0500

Counties: Bradford, Cameron, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Montour, Northumberland, Potter, Snyder, Sullivan, Tioga and Union

Northeast Region

2 Public Square
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701-1915
570-826-2511

Counties: Carbon, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Luzerne, Monroe, Northampton, Pike, Schuylkill, Susquehanna, Wayne and Wyoming

Southwest Region

400 Waterfront Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15222-4745
412-442-4091

Counties: Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Cambria, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Somerset, Washington and Westmoreland

South-central Region

909 Elmerton Ave.
Harrisburg, PA 17110-8200
717-705-4705

Counties: Adams, Bedford, Berks, Blair, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, Juniata, Lancaster, Lebanon, Mifflin, Perry and York

Southeast Region

2 East Main St.
Norristown, PA 19401-4915
484-250-5960

Counties: Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia

Central Office

Bureau of Environmental Cleanup and Brownfields

Division of Storage Tanks

P.O. Box 8762

Harrisburg, PA 17105-8762

717-772-5599

800-42-TANKS (in PA only)

For more information, visit www.dep.state.pa.us, keyword: Storage Tanks.