

Residential Underground Home Heating Oil Tanks Frequently Asked Questions

Do I have to remove or replace my residential heating oil underground storage tank by a specific deadline?

There are no Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) regulations that require the removal of underground residential heating oil storage tanks that are not leaking. Homeowners should contact their Town to determine if there are any local regulations or ordinances governing the removal and/or replacement of underground residential heating oil storage tanks. Homeowners should be aware that as their underground tank ages, the likelihood that it will leak increases. Tanks that are leaking need to be promptly removed.

What type of tank should I install if I remove my underground storage tank?

DEEP does not recommend that tanks be replaced with another underground tank. The main disadvantage of an underground tank is that a leak may go undetected for some time. With an above ground tank, the likelihood of detecting a release before it becomes severe is much greater.

Does a contractor hired to remove or replace my residential underground heating oil storage tank have to have any particular license or registration to do this type of work?

Yes. There are several requirements you should be aware of.

1. The removal or replacement of a residential underground heating oil storage tank system has been included in the definition of a home improvement in Section 20-419 of the Connecticut General Statutes since October 1, 2004. Therefore, any contractor hired to remove a residential underground heating oil storage tank system after that date must be registered with the Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) as a Home Improvement Contractor.
2. Effective October 1, 2004, any registered Home Improvement Contractor performing residential underground heating oil storage tank removals or replacements must comply with the requirements of Section 20-420 of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS). The Statute is available at www.cga.ct.gov/2011/pub/chap400.htm#Sec20-420.htm

Please note that requirements for Home Improvement Contractors conducting underground storage tank (UST) removals were revised on June 9, 2009 under Public Act 09-122. This revision has eliminated the requirement for a surety bond from Section 20-420(a) of the CGS.

Information on current requirements for home improvement contractors conducting underground storage tank (UST) removals can be found on the [Department of Consumer Protection website](#).

3. In addition, the person who disconnects and reconnects the supply line from the oil storage tank to the heating source (the oil burner) must hold an

appropriate occupational trade license for such work. A homeowner can verify an occupational contractor's license with the Occupational Unit, Trade Practices Division of the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) or from the DCP's web site at: www.ct.gov/dcp.

When selecting a contractor to remove or replace a residential underground heating oil storage tank, a homeowner should verify that the contractor is registered as a Home Improvement Contractor with the DCP. The contractor's registration number is required to be displayed in all advertising, including advertising on vehicles. A homeowner can check the status of a contractor's registration with the DCP prior to entering into a contract for a tank removal or replacement through the DCP's web site at: www.ct.gov/dcp or by calling the Department of Consumer Protection at 1-800-842-2649 or (860) 713-6110.

Do I have to investigate and clean up the resulting pollution on my property as soon as I discover that my residential underground heating oil tank or piping has leaked?

In general, an owner of residential property on which an underground home heating oil tank leaks has liability for investigating and cleaning up any pollution resulting from that leak. The DEEP recommends that, when a home heating oil leak is discovered, actions to eliminate the leak be taken immediately and actions to clean up the resulting pollution (both on and off the residential property) be undertaken in a timely manner to reduce or eliminate such liability and prevent the spread of contamination. In particular, the DEEP recommends that remedial actions be promptly undertaken when private or public drinking water wells are in close proximity or oil is being discharged to a surface water body. In such a case, the release is required to be [reported to the DEEP](#).

Do I have to report any leak from an underground storage tank on my property?

The Emergency Response & Spill Prevention Division of DEEP at (860) 424-3338 must be notified immediately of a residential underground storage tank release. If the leaking oil affects your or any of your neighbors' drinking water wells (you will be able to detect it by odor), you should also notify the DEEP Remediation Section in the Bureau of Water Protection and Land Reuse at (860) 424-3705.

Can I abandon my tank in place if it is not leaking and has never leaked?

Homeowners should first contact their Town to determine if there are any local regulations or ordinances governing the removal, replacement or abandonment of underground residential heating oil storage tanks, and also if a permit is required from the Town for either removal of a tank or abandonment of a tank in place. Even if local regulations allow in-place abandonment of a tank system (tank and associated piping) which has never leaked, DEEP discourages homeowners from abandoning any residential underground heating oil storage tank systems in place. If a tank is going to be pumped out and abandoned in place, the homeowner must also check with the local fire marshal and comply with the requirements of the NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) Codes 30 and 31.

For more information contact:

The Leaking Underground Storage Tank Program at (860) 424-3376,
The Remediation Section at (860) 424-3705, or
The Emergency Response & Spill Prevention Division at 860-424-3338 or toll-free at
866-337-7745.

Content last updated on November 8, 2011