

## **FUEL OIL TANKS**

### **COMMON QUESTIONS ASKED REGARDING FUEL OIL TANKS:**

**1. What does the law say when a tank must be replaced:**

**At present, there are no laws regulating the life span of a "Residential Oil Tank". Underground commercial tanks with storage of over 2100 gallons capacity were given a life span of 20 years for existing tanks by federal and state laws. New tanks "life span" is regulated according to construction materials and the use of cathodic protection.**

**2. Is there a problem of tanks leaking in Darien?**

**Yes, Darien's soil has a large percentage of heavy clay soil. There is also high electrolysis in the soil. Both of these factors cause rusting of the metal.**

**3. When should I consider replacing my tank?**

**If your tank is more than 15 years old, consideration should be given to replacing it. Also, if the tank is a 275 gallon tank, no matter what age, you should remove it.**

**4. Are there special tanks that are causing problems?**

**Yes, many 275 gallon tanks that were approved for aboveground use were installed underground in the late 1940's and early 1950's. These tanks are the biggest problem at this time. Other, older tanks or larger sizes are also beginning to leak.**

**5. What happens when a tank or oil line leaks?**

**With the high water table in Darien, the oil goes down to the top of the water and then spreads. It enters wells, brooks, streams and other waterways, and also comes through building foundations.**

**6. What if the tank has leaked or if there is other contamination?**

**The removal and clean-up of the contaminated soil is under laws and regulations of the state department of environmental protection (D.E.P.) Homeowners, contractors, suppliers, or the Fire Marshals are required by law to notify the state D.E.P. of any leak or spill.**

**7. What do I need to do to replace my tank?**

**New RESIDENTIAL tanks must be installed with a permit and inspection from the Building Department. All COMMERCIAL installations require a permit from the Fire Marshal's office. Tanks can be installed:**

- A) inside of buildings;**
- B) aboveground by code regulations and approved construction materials. New installations will not be approved until the old tank is removed or properly abandoned and accepted by the Fire Marshal's office.**

**8. Who can do the tank installations?**

**A licensed plumber must do the installation.**

**9. If I have a new tank installed, what must I do with the old one?**

**There are two options - both require a permit from the Fire Marshal's office:**

- A. Have the old tank removed from the ground and properly disposed of by a contractor, this also entails having the tank pumped out and completely cleaned out, as well as having the soil tested by a Connecticut certified Laboratory and results given to Fire Marshal's office for approval.**

- B. Have the tank legally abandoned by a contractor which entails the following:**
- a. The tank must be uncovered, cut open, pumped out, and cleaned out completely and all piping must be removed.**
  - b. A soil sample must be taken and tested by a Connecticut certified laboratory and results given to the Fire Marshal's office for approval.**
  - c. If test results are acceptable, then the tank may be abandoned by filling the tank with inert material; either sand or 1500# slurry concrete mix. There is also the option of having the tank filled with an approved foam. THIS METHOD MUST BE APPROVED BY THE FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE PRIOR TO BEING DONE.**
  - d. If the test results come back and show unacceptable levels of contamination, then the tank must be removed from the ground, and all contaminated soil must also be removed with it.**

**10. Is there a permit required for tank removals or abandonments?**

**Yes, as of FEBRUARY 5, 1995, all removals or abandonments are to be done with a permit through the Fire Marshal's office. If a permit is not taken out prior to the removal date, double fees will apply.**

**11. Do I need a special license to remove an underground tank?**

**Yes, a Connecticut Home Improvement Contractor License is required to remove underground tanks that have been disconnected by a properly licensed heating contractor.**

**12. What type of tanks may be installed underground:**

**Fiberglass tanks or steel tanks with cathodic protection are permitted to be installed according to code requirements. Again, all new tanks are required to have permits and inspections by the Building Department.**

**13. How do I know how old my oil tank is?**

**If your residential oil tank was installed between July 1980 and November 1994, and a permit was taken out for the installations, there is a record of it in the Fire Marshal's office. If it was installed after November 1994, then it is on record in the Building Department.**

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