

HEATING OIL TANK SAFETY

A HOMEOWNER'S GUIDE:
KNOW THE RISKS AND HOW TO MINIMIZE THEM

What should I look for?

- Are the tank and all portions of the system free from any leaks? Yes No
- Does the tank meet either Underwriters Laboratory 80 or 142 standards? (Typically indicated by a sticker or stamped label.) Yes No
- Are the tank and all supports free from significant rust and corrosion? Yes No
- Is the tank completely above the ground and at least 4 inches from any surface on all sides? Yes No
- Is the tank set on a one-piece concrete pad or concrete floor? Yes No
- Are the tank legs installed with floor flanges or another type of "feet"? Yes No
- If outdoors, is the tank on the gable end of the building or otherwise protected from roof ice & snow damage? Yes No
- If outdoors, is the filter covered or otherwise adequately protected? Yes No
- Is the supply line continuously plastic-coated copper from the tank to the furnace with no unions or splices? Yes No
- Is the inside diameter of the vent pipe at least 1.25 inches and equal to or larger than the fill pipe? Yes No
- Does the tank have a working sight gauge and vent whistle? Yes No
- Are both the fill and vent lines fitted with secure caps? Yes No

Protect your family and the environment. Be a responsible tank owner.



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search for "on premise use heating oil tanks"



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What do I do now?

If you answered "No" to any of these questions, your tank system may be at risk. You should contact your oil company or a reputable plumbing and heating contractor for further evaluation.

Why is this important?

Fuel oil is a safe and reliable source of heat for New Hampshire residents. However, age, exposure to weather, corrosion, or poor installation or maintenance can adversely affect a heating oil supply tank and piping. The result can lead to spills that can cause groundwater, surface water and soil contamination, degradation of indoor air quality, personal property damage, and lower property values.

There are more than 250,000 oil heat customers in New Hampshire, the majority of which are residential, with small (275-gallon) above-ground tanks. While the number of reported leaks and spills occurring every year is small, as the existing tank population ages, more releases are being reported. Additionally, many existing tanks do not meet today's standards.

Is there a financial risk?

Typical homeowner's insurance policies do not provide coverage for oil releases. The average cost to clean up a residential oil release is approximately \$15,000. However, depending on the severity of the release, the cost could exceed \$100,000 to complete the cleanup.

Oil Release Funding Assistance

The State of New Hampshire provides cleanup cost funding for on-premise-use heating oil tank owners who do not have private insurance coverage.

Eligibility for Funding Assistance

- Compliance with heating oil tank installation requirements found in state statute and state Fire Code.
- Compliance with NHDES "Best Management Practices For the Installation and Upgrading of On-Premise-Use Heating Oil Tanks" (BMPs).

Note: Tank owners who fail to achieve compliance with the statute, state fire code and BMPs may see a reduction in state funding, with resulting higher out-of-pocket cleanup costs.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SAFETY

SOME BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

- Set tanks on a concrete floor or on a one-piece concrete pad.
- Use floor flanges or "feet" on the base of the tank legs.
- Locate an outdoor tank on the gable-end of a building or otherwise protected from roof ice and snow damage.
- Use a top-draw system for outdoor tanks (recommended) or have an adequately protected filter assembly and supply line.
- Use plastic-coated copper for the supply line from the tank to the furnace.

For a complete list of BMPs, please visit: <https://www.des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/waste/orcb/ocs/ofost-safetank/index.htm>.



YES



NO

