



Guidance for Residential Underground Fuel Tank Releases

*CT Department of Environmental Protection
Underground Storage Tank Program Fact Sheet*



When it has been determined that an underground residential fuel oil tank or connected piping has leaked, the underground tank and/or piping should be excavated and disposed of. DEP recommends that the following actions to address oil polluted soil or ground water be undertaken.

What Should Be Removed

The underground tank and/or any underground piping should be excavated and properly disposed of. If the tank is not underground but the piping from the tank to the oil burner runs underground (a common configuration), the piping should be excavated and disposed of. When removing the tank and/or piping, any petroleum saturated or stained soil should also be removed to the extent practical. If in the course of excavating, it is determined that liquid oil (free product) is present (floating) on the water table all such floating product should be removed to the maximum extent practical. Any free product that collects in drains around the house or discharges to surface water bodies should be removed as well.

Extent of Soil Excavation

Soil samples should be collected at the base and sides of the excavation and analyzed for petroleum hydrocarbons by a certified laboratory using EPA analytical test method 418.1 or preferably the Connecticut Extractable Total Petroleum Hydrocarbon (ETPH) method. If Total Petroleum Hydrocarbon (TPH) concentrations exceed 500 mg/kg (parts per million or ppm) additional soil should be removed to the extent practical and additional soil testing should be conducted to document TPH concentrations remaining on the walls and base of the excavation.

Exceptions To Soil Excavation

If such excavation would damage or compromise the safety of the building, it may not be practical to excavate TPH contaminated soil from under or very near the building. Unless the contamination is very severe (e.g. soil saturated with oil), it may not be practical to excavate contaminated soil if the excavation would damage features such as mature trees, stone fences or other features that would be difficult to replace or repair. Remediation of TPH contaminated soil that it is not practical to remove can be accomplished through natural attenuation. Natural attenuation occurs when chemical, physical, and microbial decay processes naturally remediate the TPH polluted soil over time. Natural attenuation will reduce the concentration of TPH to acceptable levels over time. In addition, excavation of soil with TPH concentrations not significantly greater than 500 ppm TPH is not necessary.

Vapor Intrusion / Soil Venting

If it is impractical to remove TPH contamination detected above 500 ppm because it is under a building and objectionable odors occur within the building, passive venting that uses perforated plastic piping in a stone-lined trench or excavation can be used to eliminate or reduce the odor problem. If there is no noticeable petroleum odor in a building, neither passive nor active soil venting systems are necessary.

Drinking Water Well / Groundwater Sampling

If a drinking water well is located on the property with the leaking residential underground storage tank or on any immediately adjacent property, call the Remediation Program District Supervisor for advice on appropriate sampling and remedial action procedures. The names and telephone numbers of the District Supervisors in the Remediation Section of the Bureau of Waste Management are located on the map at the end of this document. In areas where ground water is not used for drinking water purposes, ground water samples do not need to be collected from an excavation or a monitoring well, provided that any floating product has been removed.

Documentation

Homeowners should ensure that any actions taken to address leaking residential fuel oil tanks are well documented. In particular, all sampling locations should be marked on a map or diagram of the excavation area, and all analytical results should be included in the documentation. Homeowners should retain this information with their other important property related documents.

Questions Frequently Asked by Homeowners:

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



There are no Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) 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. Tanks that are leaking, however, need to be promptly removed. DEP does not recommend that such tanks be replaced with another underground tank.

- 2. 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 three 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 as a Home Improvement Contractor.

(2) Also, effective on October 1, 2004, any registered Home Improvement Contractor performing residential underground heating oil storage tank removals or replacements must comply with new requirements pursuant to Section 20-420 of the Connecticut General Statutes. The Statute is available is available at:

<http://www.cga.ct.gov/2005/pub/Chap400.htm#Sec20-420.htm>

A fact sheet titled "Home Improvement Underground Storage Removal Requirements Effective October 1, 2004" is available from the Department of Consumer Protection's Internet web site at:

http://www.ct.gov/dcp/lib/dcp/trade_practices/bond_guidelines_ust4.doc.

(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 Internet web site at: <http://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 Internet web site at: <http://www.ct.gov/dcp> or by calling the Department of Consumer Protection at 1-800-842-2649 or (860) 713-6110.

3. ***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 fuel oil tank leaks has liability for investigating and cleaning up any pollution resulting from that leak. The DEP recommends that, when a fuel 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. In particular, the DEP 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. The property owner would be required to clean up such pollution only if DEP issues an administrative order or otherwise takes action to compel the owner to undertake remediation.

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



The Oil & Chemical Spill Response Division of DEP at (860) 424-3338 should be notified 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 DEP Remediation Section in the Bureau of Waste Management at (860) 424-3705.

5. 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, DEP 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 either:

The Leaking Underground Storage Tank Program at (860) 424-3376
or
The Remediation Section at (860) 424-3705



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Revised September 2005

Printed on recycled paper, 30% post-consumer content

**CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
BUREAU OF WASTE MANAGEMENT
REMEDIAATION DISTRICT TOWNS**

**CENTRAL
DISTRICT (23)**

Berlin
Bristol
Cheshire
Colchester
Cromwell
Durham
East Hampton
Hebron
Marlborough
Meriden
Middlefield
Middletown
New Britain
Newington
Plainville
Plymouth
Portland
Prospect
Rocky Hill
Southington
Wallingford
Wethersfield
Wolcott

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DISTRICT (45)**

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Ashford
Bolton
Bozrah
Brooklyn
Canterbury
Chaplin
Columbia
Coventry
East Haddam
East Lyme
Eastford
Franklin
Griswold
Groton
Hampton
Killingly
Lebanon
Ledyard
Lisbon
Lyme
Mansfield
Montville
New London
North Stonington
Norwich
Old Lyme
Plainfield
Pomfret
Preston
Putnam
Salem
Scotland
Sprague
Stafford
Sterling
Stonington
Thompson
Tolland
Union
Voluntown
Waterford
Willington
Windham
Woodstock

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Burlington
Canton
Colebrook
East Granby
East Hartford
East Windsor
Ellington
Enfield
Farmington
Glastonbury
Granby
Hartford
Hartland
Harwinton
Manchester
New Hartford
Simsbury
Somers
South Windsor
Suffield
Torrington
Vernon
West Hartford
Winchester
Windsor
Windsor Locks

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Bethel
Bethlehem
Bridgewater
Brookfield
Canaan
Cornwall
Danbury
Derby
Goshen
Kent
Litchfield
Middlebury
Morris
Naugatuck
New Fairfield
New Milford
Newtown
Norfolk
North Canaan
Oxford
Roxbury
Salisbury
Seymour
Sharon
Shelton
Sherman
Southbury
Thomaston
Warren
Washington
Waterbury
Watertown
Woodbury

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DISTRICT (20)**

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Branford
Chester
Clinton
Deep River
East Haven
Essex
Guilford
Haddam
Hamden
Killingworth
Madison
New Haven
North Branford
North Haven
Old Saybrook
Orange
West Haven
Westbrook
Woodbridge

**SOUTH WEST
DISTRICT (17)**

Bridgeport
Darien
Easton
Fairfield
Greenwich
Milford
Monroe
New Canaan
Norwalk
Redding
Ridgefield
Stamford
Stratford
Trumbull
Weston
Westport
Wilton



**CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
BUREAU OF WASTE MANAGEMENT
REMEDIATION DISTRICTS**

Remediation Section

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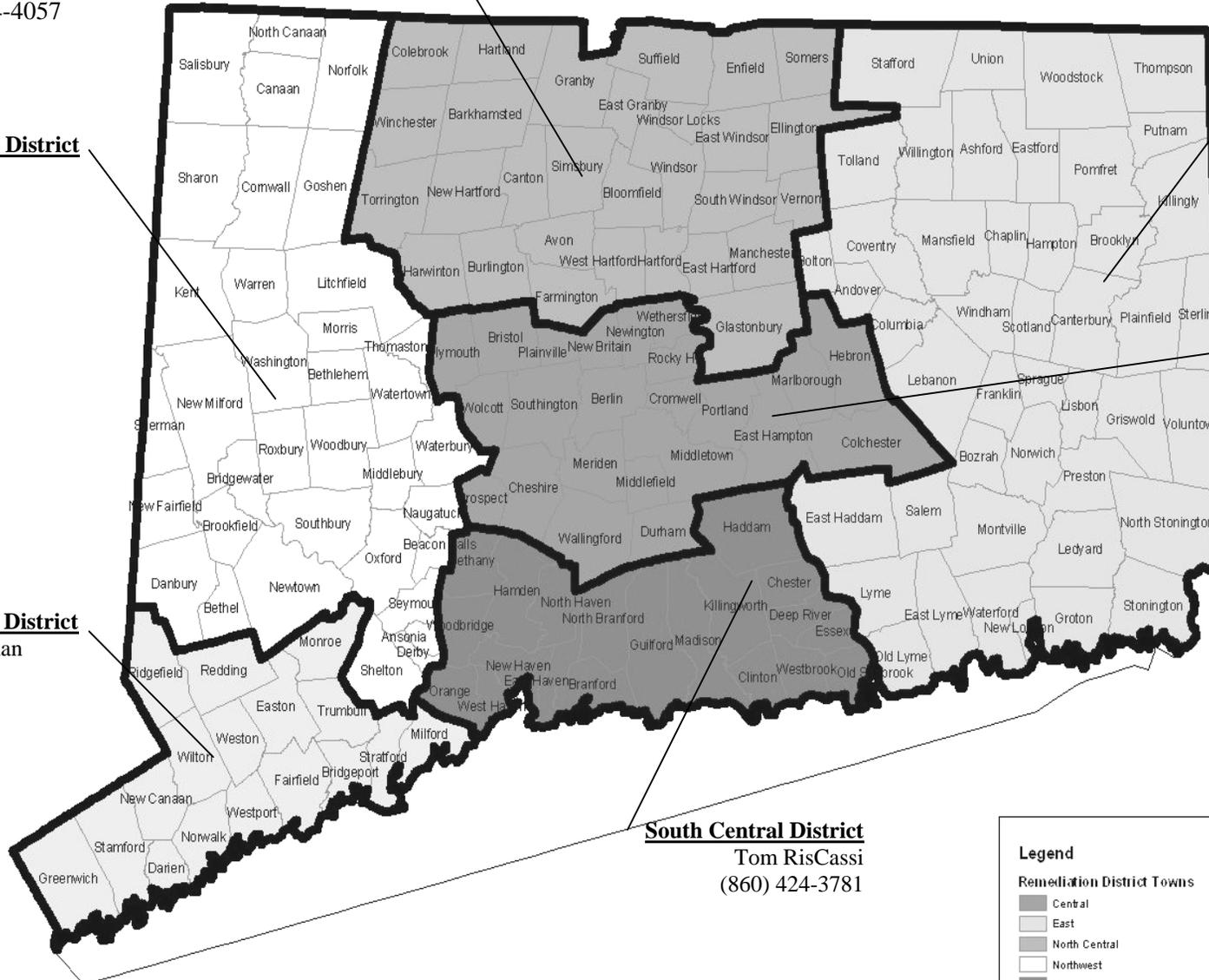
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