

Fuel Tank Warning Signs

According to Statistics Canada there are over 1,000,000 home heating oil tanks in use in Canada as well as thousands of fuel tanks used by farms and transport businesses.

Fuel tank owners are accountable under *the Environmental Protection Act*, and must report any leak or spill from a tank to the Ontario Ministry of the Environment's Spills Action Centre.

Contact your oil / gas supplier or an oil burner technician if you see or experience any of the following issues:

- Fuel tank legs that are unstable or on a shaky foundation
- If you are using more fuel than normal
- Signs of oil in nearby streams, wetlands, or ditches
- Signs of dead vegetation over or down slope of the tank
- Evidence of rust, weeping, wet spots or excessive dents on your tank
- Drips or signs of leaking around the filter or valves
- Clogged tank vent or restrictions because of ice, snow, or insect nests (**screened vents can prevent insect nest issues**)
- When the tank is being filled and the overfill whistle is silent (**ask your delivery person**)
- Spills around the fill or vent pipes



Fuel Tank Information

Ministry of the Environment
www.ontario.ca/ministry-environment

Technical Standards and Safety Association
www.tssa.org

Conservation Ontario
www.conservationontario.ca

Raisin-South Nation Source Protection Region
www.yourdrinkingwater.ca

For more information
www.yourdrinkingwater.ca



Caring for your fuel tank

Keep chemicals out of drinking water sources.





Fuel Tank Safety Tools

- Have your fuel tank installed by a certified contractor
- When installing a new tank choose a double walled tank with secondary containment
- Have your tank installed away from any floor drains or other openings in the floor to prevent spills from escaping
- Have your tank inspected annually by an oil burner technician as legally required under **Technical Standards and Safety Authority (TSSA)** and Canadian Standards Association (CSA) code
- Ensure that your basement tank is easily accessible for inspection
- If your tank is installed in a garage, provide proper distance between it and any moving vehicles
- Install an overfill protection device on your fuel tank
- Have drip trays installed under the tank and oil supply lines
- Empty all unused tanks; if you have an abandoned underground tank (underground tanks are prohibited) you are legally required to remove it and remove any contaminated soil



Your Water. Your Decision.

To report spills or to obtain more information on spill cleanup procedures contact:

*Ontario Ministry of the Environment
Spills Action Centre
1-800-268-6060 (24 hours)*

Handling Spills & Leaks

Take the following steps as soon as you find out that your fuel tank has leaked or spilled oil:

- Eliminate all sources of ignition
- Attempt to eliminate the risk if you can do so safely
- Contact your fuel supplier or registered contractor
- Contain the spill using whatever materials are available (pails, rags, newspapers, peat moss, kitty litter, absorbent pads, plastic sheeting). Do not flush any oil or contaminated material down sewers or floor drains
- Notify the Ministry of the Environment Spills Action Centre immediately if the spill is likely to cause adverse effects to water
- Place spilled oil and any contaminated soil or materials into garbage bags or plastic pails. For larger spills, you may need the services of a professional cleanup contractor
- Properly dispose of any recovered oil, contaminated soil and/or materials. Your municipality or the Ministry of the Environment can provide information on proper waste management practices
- Contact your insurance agent

Does a Home Heating Oil Leak Threaten Your Drinking Water?

Home heating oil contains many compounds that have the potential to contaminate drinking water supplies.

Home heating oil contains BTEX, an acronym for benzene, toluene, ethyl benzene, and xylenes. BTEX compounds have been associated with serious health conditions such as leukemia and Hodgkin's Lymphoma, as well as birth defects. BTEX compounds dissolve easily in water and can travel long distances in ground and surface water.

Heating oil also contains petroleum hydrocarbons (PHC), compounds that originally come from crude oil. PHCs are associated with harmful effects to the reproductive, respiratory, immune, and nervous systems. PHCs harm the kidneys, liver, skin, eyes, and blood.

Proper care of your fuel tank is in everyone's best interest. Not only can your health be compromised, reimbursement for damages to property as a result of an oil spill can be very costly. Oil spills can cause significant environmental damage and may not be fully covered by your home insurance policy.

