

On average, the Maine DEP responds to **more than one spill every day** from home heating oil tanks.

The top three causes:

- #1 Internal corrosion** due to water and sludge build-up. A licensed oil heat technician can use an ultrasonic thickness test to determine if your tank walls are getting too thin.
- #2 Physical damage** Snow and ice falling from your roof may damage the fuel filter on an outdoor tank, leaking your expensive heating oil and possibly contaminating your water well. A licensed oil heat technician can install a filter protector to prevent this from happening to you.
- #3 Overfills** A working vent whistle will stop whistling when the tank is full. This alerts the fuel truck driver to stop the delivery and prevent oil from spraying onto your yard and the side of your house.

Replacing your tank? Consider investing in a smarter and safer design. Corrosion-resistant fiberglass, top-of-tank oil dispensing, or double-walled designs help prevent spills and leaks, and can save you money in clean-up costs.



Vilco™ Fiberglass Tank

Roth Double-Walled Tank

Granby GreenShield EcoGard

*\*The tanks shown above are examples of newer heating tank designs. The Department of Environmental Protection does not endorse specific tank brands.*

## Do you need help paying for a new tank?

Homeowners who meet low income eligibility requirements can get grants and low interest loans through their local Community Action Program (CAP). Even if you don't meet eligibility requirements, there may be assistance available for you. Call the Maine DEP for more information on these programs. We are here to help you keep your home, family and environment safe!

**(207) 287-7688**

# Check Your Tank Prevent a Leak



**Spilled heating oil can pollute your drinking water and the air in your home.**

**Keep your family safe. Check your home heating oil tank to prevent leaks.**



# Is your tank in danger of leaking? Answer these questions to find out.

**But, please look - don't touch.** A rusty or oily patch on the tank could indicate a leak or weak spot.

## I have a spill or leak! What should I do?

First, call DEP's 24-hour spill reporting hotline: **(800) 482-0777**

Help is available to all owners of aboveground oil storage tanks with spills or leaks that affect the environment through the Ground and Surface Waters Clean-Up and Response Fund.

- 1 Are the tank's legs unstable or on an improper foundation?** Outside *vertical* tanks must stand on a one piece, reinforced concrete pad.  YES  NO  
Outside *horizontal* tanks must stand on a one piece, reinforced concrete pad or on solid concrete blocks.
- 2 Do you see rust, weeps, wet spots or excessive dents on the tank's surface?**  YES  NO
- 3 Are there any drips or signs of leakage around the filters, valves or other fittings?**  YES  NO

- 4 Does the oil exit through a fitting from the side of the tank rather than from the tank bottom?**  YES  NO  
A bottom oil outlet minimizes trapped water and reduces rust inside your tank.

- 5 Can snow or ice fall on the tank or filter?** A filter protector can help avoid this threat.  YES  NO

- 6 Could the tank's vent be clogged or blocked?** Check for ice and snow. Screened vents help prevent insects from building nests.  YES  NO

- 7 Is the overfill whistle blocked or silent when the tank is being filled?** It should whistle. If you're not sure, ask your oil delivery driver.  YES  NO

- 8 Are there any signs of spills around the fill pipe?**  YES  NO

- 9 Is the tank's gauge cracked, stuck, or frozen? Do you see oil or staining around it?**  YES  NO

- 10 Is your tank more than 25 years old?** It's time to consider replacing your tank to help avoid costly and dangerous tank failures.  YES  NO

**Did you answer YES to any question?  
If so, your tank may be in danger of leaking or causing a spill.**

**Call your licensed oil heat technician or local fuel supplier to schedule a checkup. Contact the Maine Fuel Board for help finding a licensed oil heat technician. (207) 624-8627**

