

## If You See A Spill Or A Leak!

1. Eliminate all sources of ignition - turn off the furnace, baseboard heaters, fireplaces, fans, etc.
2. Stop the leak if you can do so without risk
3. Contain the spill using whatever materials you have (pails, newspapers, kitty litter, absorbent pads, etc.)
4. **Immediately call the Provincial Emergency Response (PEP) Program at 1-800-663-3456**
5. If the spill enters the drains or goes onto a Saanich road, call Saanich Public Works 250-475-5599.
6. Contact your fuel supplier or a qualified hazardous materials contractor to assist with the clean up of the spill. Recovered oil and cleanup materials cannot be disposed in the garbage.
7. Transfer any remaining oil from the leaking tank to a sound tank or leak-proof container such as a 45 gallon drum.
8. Clean up the spilled oil and contaminated materials and place in sturdy containers. For a large clean up you may need a professional contractor.
9. Contact your insurance agent if needed.
10. Have a repair service replace the tank and/or other leaking components.

## Installing and Recovering Tanks

The Oil Burning Equipment and Flammable Liquid and Combustible Liquid Fuel Tank Bylaw No. 9265 requires the removal of buried tanks which are of no further use, or have not been used for two years. Once a tank is removed, the surrounding soil must be assessed for contamination. Any contamination must be cleaned up by a contractor.

Used oil collection tanks are not permitted in Saanich.

All tanks must be installed in accordance with the BC Fire Code and Saanich's Oil Burning Equipment Bylaw No. 9265. To install, relocate, abandon, or remove a tank in Saanich, you will need a permit from the Fire Department. For more information call the Fire Prevention Office at 250-475-5500.

Hiring a professional oil tank company for removals and clean-ups is strongly recommended. For more information, call the Saanich Fire Prevention Office at 250-475-5500.

## Incentive and Rebate Programs

If you are interested in replacing or upgrading your home heating system, learn more about incentives and rebates available at [www.citygreen.ca](http://www.citygreen.ca)

[saanich.ca/environment](http://saanich.ca/environment)



## Home Heating Oil Tanks

*Tank Maintenance  
& Spill Response*

A joint project of the Saanich  
Engineering, Planning and  
Fire Departments



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## Background

Do you have an underground, above-ground or basement heating oil tank on your property? A residential heating oil tank holds about 1,000 litres of fuel. This brochure could help you avoid costly and environmentally harmful oil spills.

Preventing leaks and spills is important for several reasons:

1. Oil spills can quickly have a direct environmental impact on fish and wildlife habitat in creeks, rivers and marine waters. Ground water may also be contaminated.
2. Spills on your property and to the drainage system can be expensive and complicated for homeowners and the municipality. In addition, the full cost to clean up the spill and contaminated soils may not be covered by your household insurance.
3. Depending upon the extent of the spill, you can also be in violation of Federal, Provincial and Municipal laws.



## Avoid spills by regularly inspecting your tank

Metal tanks can corrode from the inside out, making failures hard to spot before they become serious. Any water from condensation goes to the bottom of the tank where it can cause corrosion. Damaged fuel lines that lead from the tank to the furnace, and loose fuel filters can also result in leaks.

1. Check the tank for problems after each fuel delivery.
2. Make every effort to protect the fuel line between the tank and heating system.
3. Regularly check the outside of tanks for rust, particularly where legs are welded to the tank. Apply rustproof paint as needed.
4. Watch for leaks in the fuel filter, or the nozzle becoming plugged.
5. Ask your supplier to visually inspect the fuel line for leaks.
6. Keep a simple spill kit handy in case of leaks or spills (available from safety supply stores).
7. Tanks must be securely installed.

## Other preventative maintenance tips

1. Be alert to any oil smells near the tank.
2. Watch your oil bills for unexplained or sudden increases in the amount of oil you've been using.
3. Keep the tank full over the summer to reduce water condensation inside.
4. When replacing a tank, don't re-use the old oil. Water, sludge, and bacteria in old oil can cause corrosion and leaks in a new tank.
5. Have your furnace serviced annually and replace the oil filter.
6. Make sure your tank complies with your insurance requirements.
7. If tank is decommissioned make sure all piping is removed or purged and capped.



**Try to contain the spill, then immediately call the Provincial Emergency Response (PEP) Program at 1-800-663-3456**