

Environmental Programs

Storage Tank Regulations

Storage Tank Regulations

There are thousands of storage tanks in the Yukon, containing a wide variety of liquids including heating fuel, gasoline and diesel, and other hazardous substances. When storage tanks leak, or when spills happen during filling or withdrawing liquids from tanks, the stored substances can enter the environment, contaminating soil and groundwater and posing a threat to public health.

Throughout the territory there are many examples of contamination caused by old, leaking storage tanks. To ensure that new tanks do not create the same problems as before, Storage Tank Regulations were passed under Yukon's *Environment Act* in 1997. These regulations set requirements for storing hazardous substances (including petroleum products), and for keeping records of certain products stored in tanks.

When the Storage Tank Regulations Apply

Yukon's Storage Tank Regulations apply to specific tanks on land throughout the Yukon, including private property and Yukon Government land. Storage tanks on federal land are also regulated under federal law.

The Regulations do not apply to petroleum storage tanks with a capacity of 4,000L or less that are used to heat buildings, or to tanks used to store crude oil. For larger tanks or tanks used for other purposes, the Storage Tank Regulations apply to tanks that were installed or altered after 1996, including tanks located both above and below the ground.

Storage Tank Permits

Permits are required to install, modify, operate, remove or abandon storage tanks in some situations. The removal or abandonment of any tank covered by the regulations requires a permit. The need for a permit to install, modify or operate a tank depends upon the size of the tank, what substance it will hold, and whether it will be installed above or below ground.

Underground Storage Tanks (USTs)

Permits are required to install, modify or operate all sizes of underground tanks for petroleum products, except for tanks with a capacity of 4,000 litres or less which supply fuel to heat buildings. All underground storage tanks must be double-walled.

Underground storage of hazardous substances other than petroleum products is **not** allowed.

Aboveground Storage Tanks (ASTs)

Permits are required to install, modify or operate aboveground tanks that:

- can hold more than 4,000 litres of petroleum products; or
- can hold 2,000 litres or more of hazardous substances other than petroleum products.

Out-of-use Storage Tanks

Permits are required to remove or abandon both aboveground and underground storage tanks. Storage tanks must be properly abandoned or removed when:

- they have no further use; or
- they have been out of service for one year or more.

These permits contain requirements to ensure the proper removal or abandonment of storage tank systems and storage facilities, including requirements to sample the soil and/or water around the tank to make sure there is no contamination left behind. For more information on sampling requirements when abandoning or removing storage tanks, contact the Environmental Programs Branch.

National Standards

Certain other national standards apply, regardless of whether or not a permit is required. These include:

- CSA B-139, which applies to oil-fired appliances;
- the National Fire Code (NFC), which requires testing of tanks that have been temporarily out of service, and checking of product volume in tanks that are seasonally out of service; and
- the CCME Environmental Code of Practice for Aboveground and Underground Storage Tank Systems Containing Petroleum and Allied Petroleum Products, which requires that:
 - all underground storage tanks be double-walled;
 - aboveground tanks with capacities of 50,000L or less have an external secondary containment area unless the tank is double-walled; and
 - both double- and single-walled aboveground tanks with capacities of more than 50,000L have an external secondary containment area.

Keeping Records

The best way to detect a leaking tank quickly is to keep track of what goes into and out of the tank. Inventory records must be kept for:

- all underground storage tanks for motive fuel;
- all aboveground storage tanks which can hold more than 4,000 litres of motive fuel;
- any storage tanks which can hold more than 4,000 litres of heating fuel. A meter must be installed on these tanks to measure the fuel going to the heating system.

If shortages are discovered through inventory record keeping, tests will be required to determine the exact cause of the shortages (e.g. a leaking tank).

The *Environment Act* (s. 121) lays out requirements for contingency plans (what to do in case of a spill) or for further site investigations or clean-up.

For permit application forms or more information on the Storage Tank Regulations, please contact:

Fire Marshal's Office
 Protective Services Branch (C-20)
 Department of Community Services
 Box 2703
 Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6

Phone: (867) 667-5230
 Toll Free: 1-800-661-0408 ext. 5230
 Fax: (867) 667-3165

Copies of Yukon regulations may be viewed online at <http://environmentyukon.gov.yk.ca/monitoringenvironment/> under the "Standards & Approvals" section, or at any Yukon Public Library, territorial agent, territorial representative or regional services office. You may purchase copies at the Inquiry Centre, Yukon Government Administration Building, 2071-2nd Avenue in Whitehorse, or by mail from the Subscriptions Clerk, Yukon Government Queen's Printer, Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon, Y1A 2C6 (phone (867) 667-5783 or toll free 1-800-661-0408 extension 5783).

