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SPILLED HEATING OIL CAN BE A BIG PROBLEM. HAVE YOU CHECKED YOUR TANK?

On average, the Maine Department of
Environmental Protection responds to 1.5 spills
every day from home heating oil tanks alone.

Will your tank be one of them?



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We all can play an important role in preventing heating oil tank leaks by periodically checking our tanks. Unfortunately, tanks do not last forever. One of the greatest pollution threats to our groundwater, wastewater and stormwater is unintentional leakage of home heating oil from older, corroded heating oil tanks through basement floor drains and sump pumps.

TOP 3 CAUSES OF OIL TANK LEAKS:

- 1. Tank Corrosion** due to water and sludge build-up. A licensed oil heat technician can conduct an ultrasonic thickness test to determine steel thickness, which can indicate whether significant corrosion has occurred. Ultrasonic thickness testing is best used for tanks under 20 years old. For tanks over 20 years old, it is time to start planning for a tank replacement.
- 2. Parts Failure** can result from age, corrosion, and damage sustained from weather events. This includes but is not limited to rusted tank legs, unprotected filters damaged from falling ice or snow, and corroded fuel lines.
- 3. Human Error** spill causes include tank overfilling, improper maintenance or repair efforts, and damage to fuel lines and parts due to human activity.

You can do your part by checking your tank. Go to www.GAUD.ws/heating-oil-spills or scan the code at right for more information and to answer a series of questions to identify potential issues. Look but do not touch, as a rusty or oily patch on the tank could indicate a leak or weak spot.



FAQs

Replacing your tank?

Consider investing in a smarter and safer design. Corrosion-resistant fiberglass, double-walled, or double-bottom tank designs help prevent spills and leaks, and can save you money in clean-up costs.

*The tanks shown below are examples of newer heating tank designs.



Do you need help paying for a new tank or parts?

Homeowners who have questions about available programs to help pay for tank replacements but have limited income should contact Kennebec Valley Community Action Program at (207) 859-1500. If homeowners need to replace ancillary tank parts like filter protectors, gauges, fill and vent lines, or fuel lines, they should contact Maine DEP at (207) 481-6860.

Who should you contact to report an issue?

If you have a spill or leak, call Maine Dept. of Environmental Protection's 24-hour spill reporting hotline at (800) 482-0777. Help is available to all owners of above ground oil storage tanks with spills or leaks that affect the environment through the Ground and Surface Waters Clean-Up and Response Fund.