

What's the Risk?

Abandoned Fuel Tanks

Introduction

Steel tanks are commonly used to store liquid fuels such as gasoline, diesel and furnace oil. Tanks come in different sizes and construction types, and can be used for residential, commercial, agricultural and industrial applications. If maintained properly, steel tanks will have a long service life.

What's the Risk?

Abandoned tanks on a property can pose an environmental risk. In many cases, a small amount of fuel will remain inside the tank and may escape into the environment. Small fuel leaks can lead to expensive environmental clean ups. When the stored fuel was volatile, such as gasoline, then there also could be a risk of a fire or explosion. Abandoned underground tanks can pose an increased environmental risk if they are left in the ground.



What can be done?

In some cases, old fuel tanks are owned by the fuel oil supplier who filled the tanks. The fuel supplier should be contacted to have the unwanted tanks safely removed.

A qualified petroleum contractor must be involved to determine the steps to remove any fuel in the tanks and develop a plan to dispose of the tank in accordance with the Authority Having Jurisdiction regulations.

In Ontario, underground tanks which are no longer in service must be removed within two years of disuse as per TSSA guidelines. Only a registered Petroleum Contactor can remove an underground tank.

You can refer to these rules by visiting, <https://www.tssa.org/en/fuels/environmental-services.aspx>

For other provinces, please check with your Authority Having Jurisdiction for abandoned fuel oil tanks.