

# Tank Removal Checklist

WHPP 910

## Step 1 – DO YOUR HOMEWORK

*Ask your local fire prevention officer about*

- Any local rules that may be more stringent than what state law requires; and
- Requirements for measuring for the presence of contamination.

## Step 2 – HIRE A CONTRACTOR

*Shop around...*

- Seek tank removal referrals from your:
  - Oil Company;
  - Local public works department;
  - Neighbors;
  - Yellow Pages/Internet Directory, (look under Oil Tanks or Tank Services); or
  - Local fire department.
- Compare costs, (prices are higher for removals of tanks that are large or difficult to reach);
- Compare services, (the basic services a contractor should provide are listed in Step 3 below);
- Check references; and
- Ask your oil company if it will credit you for any usable fuel that is removed from your tank. If not, make sure the oil is reused or recycled.

*Make sure the contractor you select..*

- Understands the state regulations and any local rules;
- Is able to inspect the tank and identify possible signs of contamination;
- Provides a written contract with a specific cost estimate based on property conditions; and
- Is insured to perform such work.

## Step 3 -- THE TANK REMOVAL

*Your removal contractor should...*

- Obtain all required permits;
- Empty oil for the tank and clean out all residues or arrange for someone else to perform this work;
- Excavate the tank and piping;
- Dispose of the tank, piping residues, soil, and any remaining oil at locations that are authorized to accept them;
- Check for signs of a leak and report findings to you, (see Step 4);
- Separate clean soil from any that appears to be contaminated;
- Backfill the hole to grade; and
- Provide written documentation of the removal, including disposal or recycling records for the tank, fuel, residues, and contaminated soil, (if any).

*Your local fire department should...*

- Ensure that the tank and surrounding area are free of safety hazards;
- Ensure that a measurement for contamination is made; and
- Note on the removal permit both the condition of the tank and whether any contamination was observed.

*You should...*

- Observe the tank removal from a safe distance;
- Record any problems that are encountered by the contractor; and
- Take notes and photos to document the work, even if everything seems to be going well.

## Step 4 – THE CONTAMINATION MEASUREMENT

Contamination measurements may be performed by the tank contractor or an environmental professional. You should observe the inspection and obtain written observations from people at the scene, including the contractor and fire officials, even if the tank and piping appear sound and there appears to be no sign of contamination.

### *The basic measurement includes...*

- Recording the condition of the tank, piping, and soil;
- Checking the tank and piping for holes;
- Examining the feedline and surrounding soil;
- Checking the excavated area for visible oil stains or strong odors;
- Noting problem areas on a drawing or map of the excavation;
- Photographing the area to support written documentation;
- Taking composite soil samples to be analyzed for petroleum constituents if:
  - The condition of the tank, piping, or soil indicates a leak may have occurred;
  - Your tank is located near a well, water supply, within a Wellhead Protection Area, near a wetland, pond, or stream; or
  - You need a record of analytical results to confirm that no contamination was found.

## Step 5 (if necessary) – REPORT LEAKS OR SPILLS

State law requires that you report certain petroleum releases or threats or release to the KY Division of Waste Management (KDWM), depending on the nature and volume of the release, as well as contamination levels. The KDWM can help you in determining whether a particular situation requires reporting. Should any contamination be observed during the removal of your tank, contact your local fire department and notify the Emergency Response Team (ERT) Hotline

**ERT – 800-928-2380**

- Consult with the KDWM before proceeding with any further cleanup work. In most cases, the tank removal will not have to be halted, and the cleanup will be minimal.
- Do not, under any circumstances, allow your contractor to excavate to a point where the structure of your home is compromised.
- Any soil suspected of being contaminated should be separated from soil that appears to be clean, (so you will not be paying for the disposal of clean soil).
- If needed, hire an environmental consultant to ensure proper assessment and cleanup. The KDWM can advise you on whether this is necessary.
- Check with your insurance agent to see if you are covered in the event of an oil spill or leak at your home.

## Step 6 – KEEP GOOD RECORDS

It is important to maintain complete records of the tank removal, inspection process, and any necessary cleanup work. Keep them in a safe place with your other important records. You may be asked to produce them later if you sell your property, obtain financing, file an insurance claim, or have to update your Groundwater Protection Plan. Your documentation should include:

- Shipping records documenting recycling or disposal of the tank, piping, residues, soils, and fuel;
- An accurate drawing showing where the tank was located;
- Contamination measurement results, including any analytical analysis, if samples were taken;
- Documentation of any cleanup work, if performed;
- Your own notes and photos; and
- Written observations from people at the scene, including the contractor or any fire officials.

