

Home Heating Oil Tank Best Practices

Residential home heating oil tanks contain hundreds of gallons of fuel. These tanks should be inspected annually using a visual review and ultrasonic testing. It is extremely important for you, your investment in your home, and the environment to replace your oil tank when the inspection indicates its lifespan has expired. Addressing and upgrading recommended best practices are also extremely important.

A Tank Replacement Recommended



Patched/Repaired

Most common patching or repairing involves fiber glass or a magnetic temporary patch. In either case, the steel has lost its true integrity due to internal corrosion. If you have a patched tank, it is recommended you replace the tank as soon as possible to avoid costly clean-up and remediation.



Fails Ultrasonic Test

Oil tanks typically corrode from the inside out. Your tank may look fine from the outside but could be wearing dangerously thin. The ultrasonic test will show the true thickness of your tank.



Weeping

Weeping tanks are corroded internally and can be identified by a "saturation" of the metal by oil. Replacement is recommended as soon as possible to avoid costly clean-up and remediation.

An Equipment Upgrade Recommended

Unsleeved Feed Line in Concrete



If the oil feed line running from your tank to your boiler or furnace is encased in your concrete basement floor and is not coated in a material like plastic to protect it from degrading, an upgrade is recommended. Most homeowners are unaware that bare copper will degrade when in direct contact with concrete. This chemistry can create a situation whereby your feed line may degrade to a point where it is leaking and you may not realize it due to the encasement. We would suggest that the line be replaced with a modern coated line and relocated above the floor. This is a relatively easy fix and could help avert an issue should the line be degrading now or leak in the future.

Undersized Vent



It is extremely important that your oil tanks venting system is maintained correctly; as advancements in technology have increased, the rate at which oil flows from oil delivery trucks to your tank (60 gallons per minute). If your tanks venting system is undersized, you could have an accidental oil release from over-pressurization of your tank. This is something that all of us would like to avoid. If you have an undersized vent, we would suggest that you consider making this very important upgrade.

Vent Alarm Needed



It is extremely important that your oil tanks venting system has a vent alarm installed. A vent alarm is a small device installed between the tank and the vent pipe which signals the driver that your tank is full. A vent alarm is important because it can help prevent accidental over pumping of oil into your tank. If your tank system does not have a vent alarm, a new installation is a relatively inexpensive fix in most cases, costing less than \$100.