

# Fire & Emergency Services Department

## Guidelines for Permanent Closure of Underground Residential Heating Oil Tanks

### REFERENCES:

International Fire Code  
Washington Fire Code Amendments  
International Mechanical Code  
Department of Ecology Guidelines

### DEFINITIONS:

Underground Residential Heating Oil Tank (URHOT): An underground tank and associated piping designed to supply fuel oil for residential heating. See reference material for other definitions.

### IMPACT:

Underground tanks out of service for one year or more must be removed or abandoned in place.

### GUIDELINE:

An International Fire Code Permit, costing \$84.00, is required from the City of Renton Fire & Emergency Services Department to remove or abandon in place a URHOT. It may be obtained at:

Renton Fire Station 13  
18002 108th Avenue SE  
Renton, WA 98055  
425-430-7000

The following information must be provided in order to obtain a permit:

An 8.5 x 11 inch not-to-scale plan view sketch of the URHOT which includes:

- A. The location of the tank and piping relative to the property lines.
- B. Tank size in gallons.
- C. The last known contents of the tank.
- D. Building locations.
- E. Address of the property.
- F. Name of the property owner.
- G. Day and night contact phone for the property owner.
- H. Date and a signature of the person who made the sketch.

Note: Any history of the tank or piping that is leaking must be declared at the time of application.

The owner may remove the tank from the ground or abandon the tank in place. It is recommended that all tanks be removed from the ground since removal ensures that ground contamination is not present. Owners who abandon a tank in place may be required by future buyers, lenders or real estate officials to later remove the tank that has been abandoned. Tanks located in Aquifer Zone 1 are recommended to be removed. A state licensed contractor or company is recommended to either abandon or remove the tank and to provide certification.

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### Removing the Tank

When removing a tank from the ground, the following shall be conducted:

Caution: If the tank is near a building or other structure, abandonment in place is recommended.

1. Contents of the tank must be removed.
2. The tank must be rinsed clean.
3. Waste from cleaning must be disposed of properly.
4. All piping must be capped.
5. Inert the tank prior to removing (use dry ice).
6. Remove the tank.
7. Deliver the tank to an approved site and retain a receipt.
8. Look and smell for the presence of fuel or waste in the soil.
9. If contamination is suspected, secure the site and contact the Department of Ecology.
10. Fill the hole with clean fill material.
11. For your own records, photograph the process.

Once these steps are complete, mail or deliver a copy of the tank receipt with a letter from the property owner or agent that states that the tank has been removed in accordance with these Guidelines and permit. A statement regarding soil condition is required. That statement should be based on odors, visual soil condition and surrounding vegetative health.

A copy of the closure will be retained and will be made available as a public record to financial and real estate institutions.

### Abandoning the Tank

It is not recommended that an owner abandon their tank in place without assistance of an underground tank contractor licensed by the International Code Council or the State of Washington to decommission tanks. See the telephone directory under "Tanks-Removal".

To abandon a tank in place, the following guidelines shall be followed:

**Caution: Tanks suspected of leaking shall be removed from the ground rather than abandoned in place. Soil remediation may be required by the Department of Ecology.**

1. Contents of the tank must be removed.
2. The tank must be rinsed clean.
3. Waste from cleaning must be disposed of properly.
4. All piping must be capped.
5. Only approved fill materials shall be used - an inert solid material, such as cement slurry or foam.
6. Cap all openings to the tank, including piping.

Once these steps are complete, mail or deliver a letter that includes what type of tank fill material was used. The letter must be from the property owner or agent and state that the tank has been abandoned in place in accordance with these Guidelines and permit.

A copy of the closure will be retained and will be made available as a public record to financial and real estate institutions.

Questions regarding these Guidelines should be directed to the City of Renton Fire & Emergency Services Department at 425-430-7000.