

Impacts From Oil Spills-Be Informed!

ENVIRONMENTAL

Oil spills from home heating fuel oil tanks often involve significant quantities of leaked oil. Spills resulting from



toppled tanks and leaking lines are more likely to occur when the tank has just been filled or is in the process of being filled. Leaks from underground tanks can go undetected for months or even years.

When oil leaches through the ground, it can spread several hundred metres to contaminate wells, water tables and waterways. One litre of oil can contaminate one million litres of water to the point that it is not only unsafe, but may be detected in the smell and taste of the water.

FAMILY HEALTH

Fuel oil contains a small amount of benzene, a known carcinogen. If you can smell fuel oil upon entering your home, immediate action should be taken to investigate the source of the odour. Prolonged exposure could pose a significant health risk to you and your family.

If visitors to your home comment on the smell of fuel oil, pay attention. Prolonged exposure, even with minor spills, may affect your ability to smell the odour since you become desensitized to that particular odour over time.

FINANCIAL LOSS

Millions of dollars have been paid by mutual insurance companies in Canada in recent years, to cover the cost of cleaning up oil spills. The cost of clean up may range from a few thousand dollars to hundreds of thousands of dollars. Most of these spills have resulted from tanks that



are 15 years of age or older, but even new tanks can fail unexpectedly.

The fuel leakage peril is not part of every insurance policy. If you are unsure if you have coverage, ask your agent or broker to check for you. Without coverage, you could be responsible for the entire clean up costs.

OIL TANKS CHECK LIST

	Yes
The legs of my fuel oil tank are resting on a questionable footing, are bent (unstable), or appear badly corroded	<input type="checkbox"/>
There are signs of leakage around the fill or vent pipes, or by the tank itself	<input type="checkbox"/>
There are signs of dripping oil from the bottom of the tank	<input type="checkbox"/>
The filter and/or fuel line located at the base of the tank is not protected from falling ice or snow	<input type="checkbox"/>
The fuel oil line for the tank runs under a concrete floor, or is encased in concrete	<input type="checkbox"/>
The vent whistle is silent when the tank is being filled (ask the delivery person)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oil consumption seems higher than normal	<input type="checkbox"/>
The fuel oil gauge for the tank is broken, missing, or faulty	<input type="checkbox"/>
I did not have my fuel oil tank, connection lines and furnace inspected by a qualified oil burner technician last year.	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered 'yes' to any of the above, contact your oil burner technician or fuel oil supplier to arrange for a more detailed inspection.