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Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation

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**Summer Time is a Great Time for Tank Inspections**

*All home heating oil tanks in Vermont must be inspected by 8/15/2020*

**Montpelier, Vt.** – Every year in Vermont, there are between 70 and 100 preventable heating fuel leaks from aboveground storage tanks (ASTs). Nearly all are avoidable. Leaks can contaminate drinking water or surface water, release toxic odors that affect residents, and impact home values. In 2017, Vermont adopted new rules to help prevent fuel leaks to keep Vermont’s residents and environment safe. These rules apply to the 120,000 aboveground fuel oil storage tanks in Vermont. The rules specify standards for new installations and require periodic inspections of existing systems.

“Early indicators show the program are helping to decrease the number of leaks in the state, which reduces state cleanup costs for uninsured releases,” said Matt Moran, manager of the Vermont Petroleum Cleanup Fund. “The new rules are helping tank owners identify and fix problems before they impact residents and the environment.”

Most of the heating fuel tanks in Vermont have already been inspected ahead of the 2020 deadline. The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and fuel dealers have worked with homeowners to replace, upgrade, or remove faulty tanks before they had a chance to leak into drinking water wells or lakes and rivers.

“While we are making great progress, about 30 percent of the tanks in Vermont still need to be inspected,” said Matt Cota of the Vermont Fuel Dealers Association. “If you’re not sure if your tank has been inspected, give your local heating oil supplier a call. This summer is great time to get your tank inspected. We don’t want anyone to find out next winter that they can’t get fuel delivered because their tank isn’t safe to fill.”

Tank owners who have not had their systems inspected yet need to do so by August 15, 2020. Tank owners can find a certified tank inspector online at [www.vermontfuel.com/tank](http://www.vermontfuel.com/tank).

If a tank passes inspection, the system is good for three years and then must be inspected again. If the tank does not meet minimum safety requirements, the tank cannot be filled and cannot receive any deliveries of fuel until the cited issues are addressed. This is called ‘red-tagging’ a tank.

The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) offers financial assistance to eligible tank owners with annual incomes below \$65,000 to help replace ASTs. The State can award up to \$2,000 for both indoor and outdoor tank replacements. The Department for Children and Families (DCF) Weatherization Program also provides funding for low income homeowners experiencing heating emergencies between November 1 and April 30 each year. If a red tagged tank is causing an emergency, the program can assist eligible homeowners with both upgrades and replacements. The Vermont Fuel Dealers Association also offers a \$250 rebate for Vermonters that replace their tank.

For general information about the rule, please contact Marc Roy at [marc.roy@vermont.gov](mailto:marc.roy@vermont.gov) or Matt Moran at [matt.moran@vermont.gov](mailto:matt.moran@vermont.gov). To apply for DEC financial assistance, please contact Kristin Schultz at [kristin.schultz@vermont.gov](mailto:kristin.schultz@vermont.gov). For DCF's Weatherization Program, please contact Geoff Wilcox at [geoff.wilcox@vermont.gov](mailto:geoff.wilcox@vermont.gov). Details on the VFDA Tank Rebate Program can be found at [www.vermontfuel.com/tankrebate](http://www.vermontfuel.com/tankrebate).

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