



Maine Center for  
Disease Control and Prevention

An Office of the  
Department of Health and Human Services

# Double-Walled Home Heating Oil Tanks

Adapted from a Maine Dept. of  
Environmental Protection Fact Sheet

Maine CDC Drinking Water Program • 11 SHS, 286 Water St., 3rd Floor, Augusta, ME 04330 • 287-2070 • www.medwp.com

## Protect your drinking water source by using double-walled heating oil tanks.

Maine law requires all new and replacement home heating oil tanks within the wellhead protection zone of community drinking water wells are **double-walled** or have **secondary containment**.

You may not have a drinking water well located on your property, but community drinking water wells can be closer than you think.

## What is the wellhead protection zone of a community drinking water well?

The wellhead protection zone of a community drinking water well is the greater of the:

- area within 1,000 feet of the well; or
- source water protection area of the well mapped by the Department of Health and Human Services as described under Title 30-A § 2001 sub§ 20-A.



Image depicting wellhead protection area: 1000' buffer zone (red), 200-day travel zone (brown), and 2,500-day travel zone (orange).

## How do I find out if my building is within the wellhead protection zone of a community drinking water well?

Contact your local water district or call the Maine Drinking Water Program at 287-2070 to identify the location of any nearby wellhead protection zones.

## Do oil tanks have to be 'listed'?

Yes. Any tank or secondary containment installed in the wellhead protection zone of a community drinking water well must be "listed" (tested) by a nationally recognized, independent testing laboratory.

## Can anybody install these tanks?

No. Home heating oil tanks installed in the wellhead protection zone of a community drinking water well must be installed by a journeyman or master oil burner technician, licensed by the Oil and Solid Fuel Board or - if the tank is an outside tank serving manufactured housing - by a mobile home mechanic licensed by the Oil and Solid Fuel Board.

## Why are double-walled and secondary containment home heating oil tanks necessary?

On average, the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) responds to more than one spill a day from home heating oil tanks at single family residences alone. Such spills contaminate wells, pollute the air in your home, and often cause considerable damage to the house.

Corrosion is the single largest cause of leaks from home heating oil tanks. Double-walled tanks and secondary containment vessels help minimize the number of spills by preventing corrosion and catching any oil leaking from the inner tank.



### Keep Your Drinking Water Safe:

✓ Protect Your Source

✓ Take Your Samples

✓ Maintain Your Treatment

✓ Inspect Your Pipes & Tanks

## Who do I call for more information?

Contact Peter Moulton or David McCaskill at the DEP's Bureau of Remediation and Waste Management at 287-2651 or visit [www.maine.gov/dep/spills](http://www.maine.gov/dep/spills)

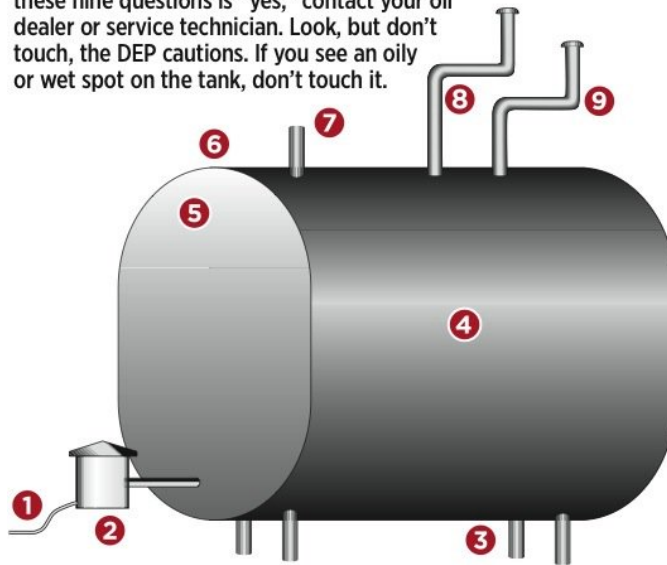
Find a licensed oil technician at: [tinyurl.com/OilTechnician](http://tinyurl.com/OilTechnician)

For help locating public drinking water supplies, visit [www.medwp.com](http://www.medwp.com) > Public Water Systems > Mapping of Public Water Systems in Maine

Call the Drinking Water Program with any questions you may have regarding public water systems at 287-2070.

## Is your oil tank safe?

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection has developed a checklist to help homeowners determine if their heating oil tank is in good condition. If the answer to any of these nine questions is "yes," contact your oil dealer or service technician. Look, but don't touch, the DEP cautions. If you see an oily or wet spot on the tank, don't touch it.



1. Any oil lines running above ground or under concrete, without being encased in protective tubing?
2. Any drips or signs of leakage at the filter or valves?
3. Are the tank legs unstable or is the foundation uneven?
4. Do you see rust, wet spots or excessive dents?
5. Is the tank more than 25 years old?
6. Could ice or snow fall on the tank or filter?
7. Is the tank gauge cracked, stuck, frozen or oil-stained?
8. Any signs of spillage around the fill pipe?
9. Any signs of the tank vent being blocked by snow, ice or insect nests?

SOURCE: Maine Department of Environmental Protection  
Image source: Portland Press Herald.

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