

These provisions outline the process for decommissioning residential heating oil tanks (RHOT) and its associated piping that contains, or previously contained, heating oil for the primary purpose of heating single family or duplex residential structures.

These provisions do not address requirements for aboveground heating oil tanks, or tanks other than residential heating oil tanks.

## Permits

A site specific construction permit is required from the Bellevue Fire Department prior to decommissioning any underground residential heating oil tank. Decommissioning work may not begin until a permit has been issued.

Permit applications may be submitted using [www.mybuildingpermit.com](http://www.mybuildingpermit.com). Permits will be issued electronically after submittal and online payment. You may also apply in person or by mail using our [paper application](#). After review and approval, a Permit will be e-mailed to the applicant, usually within 3 business days. For questions, contact Erin Clarke at [eclarke@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:eclarke@bellevuewa.gov).

- **IFCI Certification.** Decommissioning of RHOTs must be conducted by, or overseen by, an individual certified by the International Code Council (ICC) as an Underground Storage Tank Decommissioner.
- **Tank Decommissioning Report.** The Bellevue Fire Department form ***Underground Storage Tank Decommissioning Report*** must be completed, signed and submitted by the ICC-certified underground storage tank decommissioner performing or overseeing the work within 30 days of completion of work. The same report must be signed by the property owner, as well. It is strongly recommended that the property owner retain a copy of the ***UST Decommissioning Report***.

In addition to the site specific permit, an Operational Permit is required annually for any companies that engage in the business of removing, abandoning or otherwise disposing of residential heating oil tanks. Operational [Permit applications](#) can be accessed online and must be completed before work is begun.

## Removal vs. Abandonment in Place

Both removal and abandonment in place are methods of decommissioning available for the purposes of the International Fire Code. However, removal of the tank is strongly recommended. Applicants should carefully review the merits of their options before choosing a method of decommissioning. Tanks suspected of leaking should be removed from the ground rather than abandoned in place. The Bellevue Fire Department cannot predict what future regulations may be regarding tanks abandoned in place under the current guidelines. A tank abandoned in place now may later require removal at additional cost and potential hazard.

## Site Plans and Soil Samples

Compliance with the International Fire Code does not require that a site plan be submitted or that any soil samples be taken. However, the property owner or operator may have other obligations, including but not limited to, spill or leak reporting requirements and clean up requirements under environmental or other laws apart from the International Fire Code. Visit [www.ecy.wa.gov](http://www.ecy.wa.gov) and search "Heating Oil Tank" for more information.

## Removing a Tank

Follow these steps when removing a tank from the ground:

- 1) Find out what product is in the tank (heating oil, kerosene, waste oil, etc.).
- 2) Have the residual heating oil or petroleum product pumped from the tank by a tank decommissioning company, a tank cleaning company, or a used oil recycler.
- 3) Properly dispose of the residual product

through a tank cleaning company or a used oil recycler.

- 4) Remove oxygen from the tank by inerting with dry ice pellets to prevent an explosive mixture. When inerting with dry ice, use at least 10 pounds of pellets per 500 gallons of air space, and drop the pellets into the tank through the fill pipe opening. The tank can also be inerted by a certified marine chemist.

**Caution:** Check for submerged fill tube or pipe before inerting.

- 5) Disconnect and drain any associated piping before removing the tank from the ground. To prevent possible damage to buried utilities (telephone, natural gas, water, etc.), "Call Before You Dig" at 811.
- 6) Cap the tank except for a 1/8-inch opening prior to transport off-site. If the tank has holes and leaks, wrap it with polyethylene plastic sheets to contain the residues. Within 24 hours of evacuation, transport the inerted tank to an approved site to have it cut, cleaned, and scrapped.

If the tank is to be cut with a torch, or any other spark-producing devices, it must be inerted and certified safe for hot work by a marine chemist.

- 7) If soil contamination is suspected, secure the site and contact the Department of Ecology at 425-649-7000.
- 8) Refill the exposed hole in the ground. Use additional clean fill materials as needed.
- 9) A decommissioning report shall be completed by the ICC-certified Underground Storage Tank Decommissioner who conducted or directly supervised the decommissioning work, signed by both the property owner and the ICC-certified Underground Storage Tank Decommissioner and returned by the decommissioner to the Bellevue Fire Department ([Fire\\_Prevention@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:Fire_Prevention@bellevuewa.gov)) within 30 days of completion of the work. The information contained on the Report will be retained as a public record.

## Abandoning a Tank in Place

Follow these steps when abandoning a tank in place:

- 1) Find out what product is in the tank (heating oil, kerosene, waste oil, etc.).
- 2) Have the residual heating oil or petroleum product pumped from the tank by a tank decommissioning company, a tank cleaning company, or a used oil recycler.
- 3) Have the tank triple-rinsed and washed to remove residual product and bottom sludge or sediments as much as possible.
- 4) Dispose of the residual product and wash water properly by using a tank cleaning company or a used oil recycler.
- 5) Remove the vent pipe, and any other associated piping, if possible.
- 6) Fill the tank completely with an inert, solid material such as sand, polyurethane foam, or concrete slurry.

If the tank is to be cut with a torch, or any other spark-producing devices, it must be inerted and certified safe for hot work by a marine chemist.

- 7) Permanently cap the tank, below grade to prevent accidental refill.
- 8) The decommissioning report shall be completed by the ICC-certified Underground Storage Tank Decommissioner who conducted or directly supervised the decommissioning work, signed by both the property owner and the ICC-certified Underground Storage Tank Decommissioner and returned by the decommissioner to the Bellevue Fire Department ([Fire\\_Prevention@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:Fire_Prevention@bellevuewa.gov)) within 30 days of completion of the work. The information contained on the report will be retained as a public record.

For any questions regarding decommissioning residential heating oil tanks, please call 425-452-6872.