



TANK TIP 9

WITHDRAWAL AND REMOVAL OF STORAGE TANK SYSTEMS

The **Storage Tank Systems for Petroleum Products and Allied Petroleum Products Regulations** set out requirements for the withdrawal from service and removal of a storage tank system or component.

Whether active or inactive, a storage tank system is always a potential hazard. Removing a system or withdrawing it from service must be done properly to ensure there is no danger to people or the environment. Some provinces and territories license or certify persons to remove storage tank systems.

In these provinces and territories, only such persons can permanently withdraw a system from service, or remove it. In other provinces or territories, this work must be supervised by a professional engineer. A list of provinces and territories that license or certify persons is available on our website. Some provincial and territorial authorities provide online directories to help you find a certified person.

TEMPORARY WITHDRAWAL FROM SERVICE

Section 43 of the Regulations requires that you:

maintain and operate the cathodic protection (if present) during the entire period the system is withdrawn

and

attach a label to the system's fill pipe saying that the system is temporarily out of service (to prevent from mistakenly filling a system that has been withdrawn from service for repairs)

and

keep a record of the date you withdrew the tank or component from service

If your **system or component has been withdrawn from service for more than a year**, you must inspect it or test it for leaks before returning it to service. The test you do will depend on the tank type:

- underground tanks (except vertically oriented underground tanks) or shop-fabricated aboveground tanks require a tank precision leak detection test
- field-erected aboveground tanks or vertically oriented underground tanks require an inspection of the floor

A **temporary withdrawal must last less than two years**. A system that is withdrawn for two or more years must be permanently withdrawn.

PERMANENT WITHDRAWAL FROM SERVICE

Per **section 44** of the Regulations, you must **keep a record** of the date on which the permanent withdrawal of the storage tank system took place and a **record** (for example, an invoice) showing that the withdrawal was carried out by an approved person or supervised by a professional engineer, as applicable.



In addition, you must ensure that:

- all the liquids and sludge are properly removed and disposed of
- the tank is purged (emptied) of vapour to less than 10% of the lower flammability limit, and the presence of vapour is checked with a combustible gas meter
- the withdrawal is done in such a way that it poses no short- or long-term threat to the environment or to human health or safety
- a label is attached to the fill pipe saying that the tank system is permanently out of service
- Environment and Climate Change Canada is notified of the system withdrawal from service within 60 days, by updating your tank system identification file through the online Federal Identification Storage Tank System Registry (FIRSTS) at www.ec.gc.ca/rfiss-firsts/secureprotege/LoginEntree.aspx

REMOVAL

The Regulations require that you **remove storage tank systems and their components if you permanently withdraw them from service**. The requirements for removal depend on the tank type:

- for underground and shop-fabricated aboveground tanks, remove all tanks, piping and components
- for field-erected aboveground tanks, remove all piping and components outside the tanks. The tanks themselves may remain in place

As for the permanent withdrawal, you must **keep a record** of the date on which the removal of the storage tank system took place and a **record** (for example, an invoice) showing that the removal was carried out by an approved person or supervised by a professional engineer, as applicable.

COMPULSORY WITHDRAWAL AND REMOVAL

The following pose a risk to the environment and any such existing installations should have been permanently withdrawn from service and removed by now:

- single-walled underground tanks or piping without leak detection and cathodic protection (that is, protection against corrosion)
- aboveground tanks installed underground and underground tanks installed aboveground
- partially buried tanks

For more information, visit our website

www.canada.ca/petroleum-products-storage-tanks

If the information you need is not available on our website, contact your regional office or the Storage Tank Program:

Pacific & Yukon	reservoirs-py-tanks@ec.gc.ca	Quebec	reservoirs-qc-tanks@ec.gc.ca
Prairie & Northern	promconrpn-compropnr@ec.gc.ca	Atlantic	enviroinfo@ec.gc.ca
Ontario	promcon-on-compro@ec.gc.ca	Storage Tank Program	registrereservoir-tankregistry@ec.gc.ca

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