



## BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR MOTOR VEHICLE RECYCLERS



# UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANKS

An **underground storage tank (UST)** system is any tank (or combination of tanks) and connected piping having at least 10 percent of their combined volume underground. The tank system includes the tank, underground piping, other underground equipment, and any associated containment system.

### DID YOU KNOW?

- ✓ Since 1986, over 2,100 leaking underground storage tanks have been identified in New Hampshire.
- ✓ Owners of UST systems may be eligible for reimbursement funds for the cost of cleaning an accidental release, if the UST systems are registered with DES and other UST regulatory requirements are being met.
- ✓ Even a pin-hole sized leak in a UST can cause serious, costly groundwater clean-up problems.

UST systems that contain regulated substances (petroleum or other hazardous substances) can threaten human safety and health, as well as the environment. Any leak or spill from a UST system can contaminate our surface water or ground water supplies. In addition, fumes from a leaking UST system can travel beneath the ground and collect in areas such as basements, living spaces, utility vaults, and parking garages. Fumes collected in these areas can pose a serious threat of explosion, fire, and asphyxiation or other health problems.

Cleaning up releases from UST systems is difficult and usually expensive. It is much easier and far less costly to prevent releases *before* they happen.

### BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

- ▶ Register UST systems that store more than 110 gallons of gasoline, diesel fuel, motor oil, used oil, or other regulated substances. Registration forms can be obtained by calling the N.H. Department of Environmental Services (DES) at (603) 271-3503 and from the Internet at [www.des.nh.gov](http://www.des.nh.gov).

*(Note: You do not need to register UST systems that store heating oil used for on-premise heating, provided the largest tank in the system is no more than 1,100 gallons and the heating oil is not used oil.)*

- ▶ Stop using and close (e.g., remove or fill in place) all single-walled steel USTs lacking cathodic protection that are over 25 years old.

- ▶ Do not install, close, or upgrade a UST system without first obtaining DES approval.
- ▶ Equip all UST systems with spill containment devices and overflow protection devices.
- ▶ Label the fill pipe with the name of the regulated substance contained in the tank.
- ▶ Do not mix different types of substances in the same tank.
- ▶ Protect UST fill and vent pipes from being hit by vehicles and other equipment, including snow plows, fork lifts, tow trucks, flat beds, customer vehicles, and the like.
- ▶ Keep tank fill pipes closed, except when adding or removing product.
- ▶ Monitor the quantity of regulated substances added to and removed from the USTs, and use the information to determine whether the system might be leaking. Keep a written log on-site.
- ▶ Keep spill control equipment nearby. Immediately contain and clean up spills and leaks.
- ▶ Immediately report large or uncontrolled spills. From 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, call DES at (603) 271-3644. All other times, call the State Police at (603) 223-4381 or 1-800-525-5555.

*This guide sheet provides general guidance only.*

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, CONTACT:**



N.H. Department of Environmental Services  
 Waste Management Division--N.H. Green Yards Program  
 29 Hazen Drive, PO Box 95, Concord, NH 03302-0095  
*telephone:* (603) 271-2925; *fax:* (603) 271-2456  
*e-mail:* [nhgreenyards@des.nh.gov](mailto:nhgreenyards@des.nh.gov)  
*website:* [www.des.nh.gov](http://www.des.nh.gov)



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