

Every year, spills ("releases") that are associated with heating oil tanks located in basements, garages, and underground are reported to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Many of these releases are the result of overfills and other problems that occur when deliveries are made to heating oil tanks and can usually be avoided.

With this brochure, DEP is providing fuel oil distribution companies with some reminders about how these releases can be avoided. When these types of releases occur, the company that makes the delivery bears part or all of the responsibility for cleaning up the release. With proper training, the likelihood of releases occurring can be minimized and costly cleanups, as well as harm to the environment, can be avoided.

The following table shows how releases have occurred during heating oil deliveries and suggests some simple steps that can be taken to prevent, or at least reduce that likelihood that a release will occur. **Every heating oil company should ensure that employees who make deliveries are properly trained to perform all of these preventative measures.**

Please note: A release of 10 gallons or more of home heating oil within 24 hours requires notification to DEP. This notification must be made within 2 hours (see back page for phone numbers). Although a release of less than 10 gallons doesn't require notification to DEP, any resulting contamination needs to be cleaned up.

Cause of Releases	What You Can Do to Avoid Releases
A delivery is made to a fill pipe that is not connected to a tank (the tank may have been removed, but not the fill pipe; or a fill pipe has been installed where a new tank will be located, but the tank has not yet been installed).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inspect fuel receipt prior to delivery to ensure that the fill pipe is connected to a tank. 2. Double-check which tank/building/home the fuel delivery is to be made.
Vent pipe is not visible during filling operation; an overfill can occur through the vent pipe.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make sure you know the location of the vent pipe and can observe it during filling.
Tank ruptures due to customer equipment malfunctions or over-pressurization of tank by oil delivery truck.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be aware of signs that customer equipment is not functioning properly. 2. Encourage customers to take preventative steps, such as having tank/pipes/feedline inspected each year (when oil burner is cleaned), encasing the copper feed line in plastic tubing, and installing an overfill warning device on the tank if isn't equipped with one.
Deliveries made to tanks that are already filled or the amount of fuel necessary to fill tank is overestimated.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Double-check which tank/building/home the fuel delivery is to be made. 2. Be aware of customers who are using an abnormally low quantity of oil.
The oil delivery is made by "autofill" and the driver leaves the area of the fill pipe. Upon returning, the oil has overfilled onto the ground.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Don't set on "autofill"; monitor the entire filling operation.
The vent pipe is clogged (with snow, nests, etc.), causing the tank to rupture.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inspect the vent pipe for obstructions; listen to hear air escaping.
Many tanks have no warning device (or the warning device is not operating properly) to indicate tank is full.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage customers to take preventative steps to install or repair overfill warning devices.
Deliveries are continued on schedule despite abnormal consumption.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pay attention to customers who appear to be using an abnormally high or low quantity of oil. 2. Encourage customers to advise you on changes in consumption (e.g., extended vacation). 3. Inspect tank system to determine if there is a leak.

For More Information...

Heating oil systems are regulated by the local fire departments under the Massachusetts Board of Fire Prevention Regulations (527 CMR 4.00 and 9.00). For additional information about the state fire code provisions, contact your local fire department or the Office of the State Fire Marshal (978) 567-3100 (UST Program).

To Report a Release...

Releases are regulated by DEP and the Massachusetts Contingency Plan (310 CMR 40.0000). If a release occurs during an oil delivery it may need to be reported to DEP. The 24-hour statewide emergency numbers for reporting releases:

Toll Free 888-304-1133
Local 617-556-1133

or call the appropriate regional DEP office:

Southeast (508) 946-2700
Western (413) 784-1100
Northeast (978) 694-3200
Central (508) 792-7653

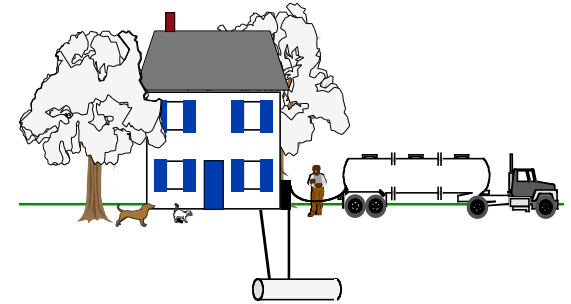
If you are in doubt as to whether or not a given situation requires notification or to what extent cleanup is necessary, contact DEP.

For general information about DEP and the Massachusetts Contingency Plan, please visit DEP on the web at:

<http://www.mass.gov/dep>

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Commonwealth of Massachusetts
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A Guide for Oil Companies: Preventing Costly Spills During Heating Oil Deliveries

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs
Department of Environmental Protection



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**Don't Wait for an Accident to
Happen!**