

Check your oil tank before you fill up for winter

Domestic heating oil can cause major problems if it leaks into the environment. It can pollute rivers, harm wildlife and contaminate the ground. Cleaning up after leaks can be very expensive and the costs are not always covered by household insurance policies.

If you own a domestic oil tank, you should follow the Environment Agency's advice:

- Regularly look for corrosion damage and signs of leaks on the tank and pipe work. If you notice a problem, get it fixed straight away.
- Place your oil tank as far away from drains, streams and ponds as possible.
- Secondary containment (such as a bund) will prevent oil from escaping into the environment in the event of a leak developing. This is a legal requirement for domestic tanks which store in excess of 3,500 litres.
- Arrange for your boiler and tank to be serviced at least once a year by an Oil Firing Technical Association (OFTEC) technician.
- Monitor your oil usage levels. If your oil usage suddenly changes this could indicate a leak.
- Supervise your oil deliveries. Don't allow your tank to be overfilled and do not purchase more oil than you can safely store.

Further information can be obtained by visiting the Environment Agency's website at www.environment-agency.gov.uk/osr

If you would like to report an oil spill or leak, please contact the Environment Agency's emergency hotline on 0800 807060.