

# CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

## Fire Marshal's Office

3030 78<sup>th</sup> Ave SE | MERCER ISLAND, WA 98040

PHONE: 206.275.7966 | [www.mercerisland.gov](http://www.mercerisland.gov)



## Underground Storage Tanks

### REMOVAL/DECOMMISSIONING OF HOME HEATING OIL TANKS

- The Mercer Island Fire Department regulates the decommissioning of home heating oil tanks through the authority of the **International Fire Code**.
- Reports to the Department of Ecology are required under the agency's guidelines.
- Under normal circumstances fuel oil in soil is not considered a fire hazard.
- Current International Fire Code Institute (IFCI Underground Removal) certification is required.
- **DECOMMISSIONING:** The removal of all contents, with an interior wash. See other requirements below.
- **REMOVAL:** The physical removal of the abandoned fuel tank.

### INTERNATIONAL FIRE CODE 2018 EDITION CHAPTER 57

5704.2.13 Tanks abandoned in place.

Tanks abandoned in place shall be as follows:

1. Flammable and combustible liquids shall be removed from the tank and connected piping.
2. The suction, inlet, gauge, vapor return and vapor lines shall be disconnected.
3. The tank shall be filled completely with an approved inert solid material.
4. Remaining underground piping shall be capped or plugged.
5. A record of tank size, location and date of abandonment shall be retained.
6. All exterior above-grade fill piping shall be permanently removed when tanks are abandoned or removed.

### SITE DRAWINGS

A site drawing showing the tank location on the property, distance (in feet) to the nearest corner foundation of the structure, tank capacity and an outline of the entire foundation and property lines is required.

The simple site map must be drawn to a scale. The site drawing must also include the owner or contractor's signature. A plan review will be done on the site map. This will be accomplished before an inspection may take place.

### PERMIT REQUIRED

The removal, installing new or decommissioning of oil tanks is regulated by permit. Obtain the permit(s) at: <https://www.mercerisland.gov/cpd/page/permit-forms>

Combustible liquid home heating oil tanks require a permit for decommission or removal. One permit is allowed for multiple tanks on a single site provided the capacity of the tanks does not exceed 1000 gallons. Flammable liquid tank removal shall be in accordance with NFPA 30 and the International Fire Code. Permits are issued on a site by site basis. Specific requirements are in effect including the requirement that a Marine Chemist be on site to certify the tanks as inert. Call the Permit Center for a permit.

## INSPECTION REQUIRED

A site inspection is normally required. Please request your inspection at [www.MyBuildingPermit.com](http://www.MyBuildingPermit.com) or the inspection request line (206) 275-7979.

**Exception:** Providers that are in good standing with the Mercer Island Fire Code Official with current IFCI "Underground Storage Tank (UST) Decommissioner" certification.

If an inspection is not required, due to Trusted Contractor Status, the **Certificate of Decommissioning** and photos shall be emailed to [fire\\_marshall@mercerisland.gov](mailto:fire_marshall@mercerisland.gov)

## TRUSTED CONTRACTORS LIST

An IFCI "Underground Storage Tank (UST) Decommissioner" certified provider, with current certification, may "self-inspect" provided the site drawing showing tank location in relation to property lines, driveways and structures is included and a certificate of decommissioning and or removal is forwarded to the Permit Center.

## TO THE CONTRACTOR

- A "**CERTIFICATE OF DECOMMISSIONING**", properly signed by the responsible party at the time of removal or decommissioning will be made available to the inspector at the time of the inspection.
- Verification that the removal or decommissioning has been accomplished to the standards outlined by the WSDOE and/or INTERNATIONAL FIRE CODE.

**NOTE:** In the event that the Fire Official or designee is not available for the inspection, a copy of your IFCI certificate and official decommissioning document may be accepted.

## DECOMMISSIONING TANK ON SITE

No Cutting shall be allowed that produces sparks or heat.

1. The tank contents shall be removed from the tank and all connected lines
2. The suction inlet, vapor return lines shall be disconnected.
3. Any lines remaining in the ground shall be capped or suitably (PERMANENTLY) plugged.
4. The tank shall be filled with an **approved inert material**. (See the Fire Code insert above).
  - "Approved" may be concrete slurry, sand or non-combustible polyurethane foam.  
**Polyurethane may not be used** if the tank is within 3 feet of a foundation or under a driveway.

The Department of Ecology and the Mercer Island Fire Department both consider that tank removal by persons properly trained and qualified, is the very best method of handling abandoned fuel oil tanks.

## DECOMMISSIONING IN PLACE

**The owner must be aware that in the event the property is sold, the lending institution, realtor and or the new owner may require the tank be removed, at the seller's expense. Fuel oil is considered a hazardous material.**

## SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

- DO NOT use a flammable gas-cutting torch or a metal friction-type cutting wheel that produces sparks or open flame.
- DO NOT crawl into the open pit, and stay away from the edges of the pit.
- Be certain that you have enough metal storage capacity to hold the contents of the tank.
- Tank contents must be disposed of at a hazardous materials disposal site.
- **NEVER** enter a tank – **FOR ANY REASON!**
- Have a fire extinguisher near the site (within 30 feet), with a minimum rating of 20B:C.

If you have any questions regarding this or any other fire prevention matter, please call the City of Mercer Island Fire Department at 206.275.7966