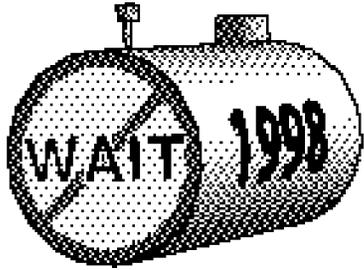


Tank Closure

Closure is one way to help protect human health and the environment, particularly groundwater, from the threats posed by many older underground storage tanks.



**Don't
Wait...**

Was your underground storage tank (UST) installed before December 22, 1988?

If the answer is "yes,"
by December 22, 1998, you must select
one of the following three options:

- # Upgrade the UST by adding spill, overfill, and corrosion protection, *OR*
- # Replace it with a new UST that has spill, overfill, and corrosion protection, *OR*
- # **Properly close the old UST.**

The information that follows will help you close your UST properly.

You can close your UST temporarily or permanently.

Closing Temporarily

You may temporarily close your UST for up to 12 months by following these requirements for **temporary closure**:

- # Continue to monitor for leaks by maintaining the UST's leak detection. (If your UST is *empty*, you do not need to maintain leak detection.) Also, continue to monitor and maintain any corrosion protection systems. If a release is discovered, quickly stop the release, notify your regulatory authority, and take appropriate action to clean up the site.
- # If the UST remains temporarily closed for more than 3 months, leave vent lines open, but cap and secure all other lines, pumps, manways, and ancillary equipment.

After 12 months of **temporary** closure, you have three options:

1. **You must permanently close your UST** if it doesn't meet the applicable requirements for new or upgraded USTs (except for spill and overfill).
2. **You can ask your regulatory authority for an extension** beyond 12 months, if you provide an assessment that determines whether contamination is present at your site.
3. **Your UST can remain temporarily closed** without needing an extension granted by the regulatory authority if the UST meets the applicable requirements for new or upgraded USTs (except for spill and overfill) and the requirements noted above for temporary closure.

If you decide to close your UST permanently, follow these requirements for **permanent closure**:

- # Notify the regulatory authority at least 30 days before you close your UST.
- # Determine if contamination from your UST is present in the surrounding environment. If there is contamination, you may have to take corrective action. For at least 3 years, keep a record of the actions you take to determine if contamination is present at the site (or you can mail this record to your regulatory authority).
- # Either remove the UST from the ground or leave it in the ground. In both cases, the tank must be emptied and cleaned by removing all liquids, dangerous vapor levels, and accumulated sludge. These potentially very hazardous actions need to be carried out carefully by trained professionals who follow standard safety practices. If you leave the UST in the ground, have it filled with a harmless, chemically inactive solid, like sand.

State and local regulations may be more stringent than the federal regulations. Check with your regulatory authority. If you are not sure who your regulatory authority is, you can find out by calling EPA's toll-free Hotline at (800) 424-9346.

Safe Closure Is A Must

People who do not follow standard safety

practices are killed or injured every year while closing or removing tanks. For a safe closure, you need qualified professionals who will use standard safety practices.

For more information on standard safety practices, UST owners and closure contractors should refer to "Closure of Underground Petroleum Storage Tanks," API Recommended Practice 1604 (1996), which is available for about \$22 from the American Petroleum Institute, 1220 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005, or call (202) 682-8000 for assistance.

A video and companion booklet called "Tank Closure Without Tears: An Inspector's Safety Guide" is available for \$35 from the New England Interstate Environmental Training Center, ATTN: VIDEOS, 2 Fort Road, South Portland, ME 04106, or call (207) 767-2539 for assistance.

WARNING: People are killed or injured every year while closing or removing tanks, because they have not followed safe removal practices. Only trained professionals should close or remove USTs.

Hire A Qualified Contractor

The following tips may help you find a reliable contractor to close your tanks:

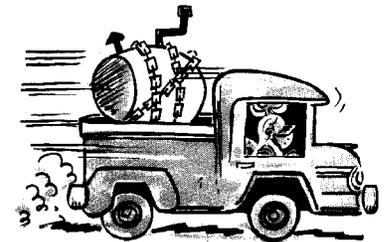
- # Ask other tank owners who have closed tanks to recommend contractors they have used.
- # Look closely at the contractors' qualifications and experience to make sure you are satisfied with both.
- # Get references from the contractor.

Call EPA's toll-free Hotline at (800) 424-9346 for phone numbers of regulatory authorities. You can also call the Hotline number to obtain a free copy of **Don't Wait Until 1998**, a booklet describing the 1998 federal deadline requirements and compliance options. You can order other free EPA publications about USTs from the Hotline number.

Information on USTs is available on the Internet by going to EPA's Office of Underground Storage Tank's World Wide Web Home Page at <http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer> and looking for "underground storage tanks."

EPA Closing Underground Storage Tanks

Brief Facts



Was your underground storage tank installed before December 22, 1988?

You may want to close your tank to meet a deadline in December 1998...