

## **Underground Storage Tank (UST) Decommissioning**

### **Background**

Underground Storage Tanks (USTs) may contain petroleum products that can cause environmental pollution if the integrity of the UST were compromised during its use. For this reason, Swinomish Office of Planning and Community Development requires that the property owner intending to remove a UST from service obtain and submit a UST Decommission Permit and associated forms to guide the decommission process and ensure protection of local resources and public health.

Many homeowners have heating oil tanks they no longer use. Home heating oil tanks, used and unused, can cause problems for property owners and the environment. Heating oil tanks can last 30 or more years, depending on the surrounding soil and thickness of the tank, before corroding and leaking.

### **A leaking tank can:**

- Contaminate soil on the primary and neighboring properties;
- Contaminate groundwater, our primary source of drinking water;
- Contaminate surface waters;
- Cause vapor accumulation under or in nearby buildings;
- Collapse and cause sinkholes.

### **Guidelines for Decommissioning Residential Heating Oil Tanks:**

There are two methods by which residential USTs can be decommissioned on the Swinomish Reservation:

1. Excavation of the tank and restoration of the site in an approved manner; or
2. Abandonment of the tank in place by filling it completely with an approved, inert solid material.

**The Swinomish Department of Planning and Community Development requires a permit to decommission an underground storage tank, as well as an inspection after decommissioning.** While homeowners are responsible for getting the proper permits for decommissioning, many contractors include this in their service. If the contractor gets the permits, be sure to get a copy for your records.

Taking soil samples after decommissioning a tank is **REQUIRED**.

**Removing or Decommissioning a Residential Heating Oil Tank:**

**1. Determine who will do the work.** We recommend hiring a licensed, experienced contractor to do the work. While homeowners can complete some of the following tasks, they can be dangerous to people and the environment. Tanks can explode under certain conditions, so unless you have suitable training and experience, hiring a qualified contractor is the safest option.

**2. Determine the tank contents.** Insert a long stick to the bottom of the tank to help determine the depth of the oil inside the tank. The tank may also contain some water, which indicates a leak in the tank. An inexpensive water detection paste can be purchased from most heating oil companies, and placed on the stick to determine if water is present.

**3. Pump the tank and dispose of contents properly.** Complete this step as soon as possible to help prevent soil and groundwater contamination.

**4 a. Remove, inspect, and dispose of the tank.** This is preferable to leaving an abandoned tank in the ground for several reasons:

- Contaminated soil can be located and cleaned up.
- Soil samples are easier to take once a tank has been removed. Any contaminated soil removed from around the tank should be properly disposed; it cannot be stored on site. Be sure to get documentation from your contractor to verify that the tank and soil was disposed of properly.

To recycle the tank as scrap metal, it must be cleaned out and all sludge must be removed and disposed of as hazardous waste. A hole should be cut in the end of the tank so the scrap metal dealer can verify that no sludge remains.

**4 b. Inspect and decommission the tank in place.** If UST removal would damage your home or other structures, you may have it closed in place by filling it with approved material as authorized by the Swinomish Office of Planning and Community Development.

**5. Test soil for contamination.** If a leak is detected in the tank by the inspector and/or in the surrounding soil, a soil test required.

**6. Clean up contaminated soils.** Submit cleanup records and tank disposal records to the Swinomish Department of Planning and Community Development.

**7. Document everything.** Keep a file of permits, lab results, disposal records, pictures, and reports from contractors regarding any cleanup. If you hire a contractor, you are still liable for any environmental contamination. Therefore, it is important that you carefully research the options.



**OFFICE OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**  
11367 Moorage Way, La Conner, Washington 98257-0817  
Phone (360) 466.7280 | Fax (360) 466.1615

### **Underground Storage Tank Decommission Permit Application**

A permit from the Swinomish Planning Department is required prior to the removal or abandonment-in-place of an underground fuel tank.

Project Information:

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Site Address City Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Parcel No(s) \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Required Attachments:**

1. Contact Information & Signature Form
2. Contractor Certification Form
3. Agent Authorization Form

#### **Fuel Tank Removal:**

- Identify last known product in tank: \_\_\_\_\_.
- Attach a site plan showing location and size of tank on the property and proximity to structures.

#### **Important Notes:**

- Call the Swinomish Office of Planning and Community Development to schedule an inspection at least one business day prior to tank removal. **\*\*Tribal Staff must witness removal of the tank.**
- Abandonment or removal of an underground fuel tank in place can only be done by a licensed contractor with International Fire Code Institution (IFCI) certification as a tank decommissioner.



**Contact Information & Signature Form (UST Decommission)**

Attach this form to a permit application that requires it. A permit application will not be accepted without this form.

By signing this form, the undersigned certifies that the statements, answers, and information both on this form and the remainder of this permit application are true and correct to the best of his or her knowledge and belief.

Applicant/Contact \_\_\_\_\_

Name Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State Zip Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Property Owner  Same as applicant  Multiple owners (attach additional page)

Name Mailing Address

City, State Zip Phone

Email

Contractor  None  Same as applicant  Same as property owner

Name Mailing Address

City, State Zip Phone

Email License # Expires

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I am the owner of the subject property and I grant permission to field staff to enter the site to verify the presence or absence of critical areas and perform inspections of work proposed by this application;  
OR

I have the consent of the owners of the subject property and have attached Agent Authorization Form(s)





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**Agent Authorization Form**

**Swinomish Indian Tribal Community (SITC) Planning Department**

**Address** 11367 Moorage Way, La Conner, WA 98257

**Main Phone** (360) 466.7280

**Fax** (360) 466.1615

**Email** [permits@swinomish.nsn.us](mailto:permits@swinomish.nsn.us)

**HOURS**

**Mon-Wed | 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.**

**Thurs | 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.**

Use this form to authorize someone other than the property owner to apply for permits for the subject property.

Project Site:

Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**Authorization Statement**

I/we, as the owners of the property identified above, authorize \_\_\_\_\_ to act as agent to submit applications, receive correspondence regarding the application, and sign title notices on my behalf.

I/we grant permission to field staff to enter the site to verify the presence or absence of an Underground Storage Tank (UST) and perform inspections of work proposed by this application.

**Property Owner Signature(s)**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_