

# **Administrative Rule 34.02.07**

<b>SUBJECT:</b>  <b>DECOMMISSIONING RESIDENTIAL HEATING OIL TANKS</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b>  October 21, 2007
<b>REFERENCES:</b>  2006 Seattle Fire Code – Chapter 34	<b>SUPERSEDES:</b> Administrative Ruling 34.02.04 Decommissioning Residential Heating Oil Tanks, August, 2004
	<b>FCAB REVIEW DATE:</b> May 15, 2007
<b>NOTICE:</b> Administrative Rules are established per Seattle Fire Code Section 102.7 and 104.1, and they are subject to the Administrative Sections 104.8, Modifications, 104.9, Alternative Materials and Methods, and 108, Appeals.	<b>APPROVED:</b>  _____ KENNETH TIPLER, FIRE MARSHAL

## **SECTION 1 -- SCOPE**

This Administrative Rule outlines the Seattle Fire Department's process for administering Section 3404.2.13 of the Seattle Fire Code which requires that tanks and piping serving heating oil tanks which have been out of service for a period of one year or more be properly decommissioned. This Rule does not address requirements for aboveground heating oil tanks, or tanks other than residential heating oil tanks as defined herein.

## **SECTION 2 -- DEFINITIONS**

**Residential Heating Oil Tank (RHOT).** A tank having a capacity of 1,100 gallons or less, and its associated piping, that contains, or previously contained, heating oil for the primary purpose of heating one-, two-, three- or four-unit residential structures.

## **SECTION 3 -- PERMITS**

In accordance with Section 105.7.6 of the Seattle Fire Code, a permit is required from the Seattle Fire Department prior to decommissioning any underground residential heating oil tank.

The fee for such permit shall be in accordance with City Ordinance. Permit applications may be obtained by calling the Seattle Fire Department Permit Section at (206) 386-1025, Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM. Applications may also be obtained from the Seattle Fire Department Fire Prevention Division at 220 Third Avenue South, Seattle, WA 98104. Normal office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM.

## SECTION 4 -- REQUIREMENTS

**4.1 -- Permit Applications.** Application forms that have been completed and returned to the Fire Prevention Division will be reviewed, stamped, "Approved to Proceed" and returned to the applicant accompanied by:

- Permit Conditions
- Heating Oil Tank Decommissioning Report Form

Companies, or individuals, that anticipate using the permit process frequently may take advantage of the Advanced Deposit system with the Fire Department. This account, which must have a minimum balance of \$300.00 at all times, will allow for prepayment of permits and will allow for permit applications to be faxed directly to and from the Fire Department.

Applications for RHOT decommissioning permits shall be received by the Fire Marshal's Office not less than 24 hours prior to the commencement of work in order to ensure adequate time for processing.

**Decommissioning work may not commence until a Seattle Fire Department permit application stamped, "Approved to Proceed" has been received by the applicant!**

Permit applications and permit application fees are not transferable to any other property or applicant.

A permit associated with a decommissioning report reflecting that the work was performed prior to issuance of the permit will be invalidated and legal action may be initiated.

**4.2 -- IFCI Certification.** Decommissioning of RHOTs must be conducted by, or overseen by, an individual certified by the International Code Council (ICC) as an Underground Storage Tank Decommissioner. A copy of the individual's current ICC certificate must be on file with the Seattle Fire Department.

**4.3 -- Removal vs. Abandonment in Place.** Both removal and abandonment in place are methods of decommissioning available for the purposes of the Seattle Fire Code. However, removal of the tank is strongly recommended. Applicants should carefully review the merits of their options before choosing a method of decommissioning. Tanks suspected of leaking should be removed from the ground rather than abandoned in place. The Seattle Fire Department cannot predict what future regulations may require of tanks abandoned in place under the current guidelines. A tank abandoned in place now may later require removal at additional cost and potential hazard.

**4.4 -- Tank Decommissioning Report Form.** A Seattle Fire Department Heating Oil Tank Decommissioning Report Form accompanying the approved permit application must be completed and signed by the ICC-certified Underground Storage Tank Decommissioner performing or overseeing the work. This form must also be signed by the property owner and returned to the Fire Department by the certified tank decommissioner within 30 days of completion of the work. It is strongly recommended that the property owner retain a copy of the Tank Decommissioning Report Form and the permit application stamped, "Approved to Proceed," as well as all other copies of receipts, certifications and written materials associated with the project.

**4.5 -- Site Plans and Soil Samples.** Compliance with the Seattle Fire Code does not require that a site plan be submitted or that any soil samples be taken. However, the property owner or operator may have other obligations, including but not limited to, spill or leak reporting

requirements and clean up requirements under environmental or other laws apart from the Seattle Fire Code.

**4.6 -- Removing a Tank.** When removing a tank from the ground, the following steps shall be taken:

1. Find out what product is in the tank (heating oil, kerosene, waste oil, etc.).
2. Have the residual heating oil or petroleum product pumped from the tank by a tank decommissioning company, a tank cleaning company, or a used oil recycler.
3. Properly dispose of the residual product through a tank cleaning company or a used oil recycler.
4. Remove oxygen from the tank to prevent an explosive mixture by inerting with dry ice pellets. When inerting with dry ice, use at least 10 pounds of pellets per 500 gallons of air space, and drop the pellets into the tank through the fill pipe opening. The tank can also be inerted by a certified marine chemist. **Caution: Check for submerged fill tube or pipe before inerting.**
5. Disconnect and drain any associated piping before removing the tank from the ground. To prevent possible damage to buried utilities (telephone, natural gas, water, etc.), "Call Before You Dig" at 1-800-424-5555.
6. Cap the tank except for a 1/8-inch opening prior to transport off-site. If the tank has holes and leaks, wrap it with polyethylene plastic sheets to contain the residues. Within 24 hours of evacuation, transport the inerted tank to an approved site to have it cut, cleaned, and scrapped. Note: If the tank is to be cut with a torch, or any other spark-producing devices, it must be inerted and certified safe for hot work by a marine chemist. An additional Hot Work permit will be required from the Seattle Fire Department prior to commencement of any hot work.
7. If soil contamination is suspected, secure the site and contact the Department of Ecology at (425) 649-7000.
8. Refill the exposed hole in the ground. Use additional clean fill materials as needed.
9. The Seattle Fire Department Heating Oil Tank Decommissioning Report Form shall be completed by the ICC-certified Underground Storage Tank Decommissioner who conducted or directly supervised the decommissioning work, signed by both the property owner and the ICC-certified Underground Storage Tank Decommissioner and returned by the decommissioner to the Seattle Fire Department within 30 days of completion of the work. The information contained on the Report will be retained as a public record.

**4.7 -- Abandoning a Tank in Place.** When abandoning a tank in place, the following steps shall be taken:

1. Find out what product is in the tank (heating oil, kerosene, waste oil, etc.).
2. Have the residual heating oil or petroleum product pumped from the tank by a tank decommissioning company, a tank cleaning company, or a used oil recycler.

3. Have the tank triple rinsed and washed to remove residual product and bottom sludge or sediments as much as possible.
4. Properly dispose of the residual product and wash water through a tank cleaning company or a used oil recycler.
5. Remove the vent pipe, and any other associated piping, if possible.
6. Tanks having a capacity of 1,100 gallons, or less, may be left empty if the fill line is permanently capped or plugged below grade. Alternatively, fill the tank completely with an inert, solid material such as sand, polyurethane foam, or concrete slurry. **Note:** If the tank is to be cut with a torch, or any other spark-producing devices, it must be inerted and certified safe for hot work by a marine chemist. An additional Hot Work permit will be required from the Seattle Fire Department prior to commencement of any hot work.
7. Permanently cap the tank, below grade to prevent accidental refill.
8. The Seattle Fire Department Heating Oil Tank Decommissioning Report Form shall be completed by the ICC-certified Underground Storage Tank Decommissioner who conducted or directly supervised the decommissioning work, signed by both the property owner and the ICC-certified Underground Storage Tank Decommissioner and returned by the decommissioner to the Seattle Fire Department within 30 days of completion of the work. The information contained on the Report will be retained as a public record.