

# Well-A-Syst

A voluntary program to assist private drinking well users evaluate and modify practices to protect their drinking water supply

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## Petroleum Storage Management

### Why should you be concerned?

Above-ground and under-ground storage of liquid petroleum products such as motor oil, gasoline and heating fuel present a threat to water quality.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that nearly one-fourth of the underground petroleum storage tanks in the United States may now be leaking. One quart of oil can contaminate 1 million quarts (250,000 gallons) of water. As a result, a few quarts of gasoline in the ground water may be enough to taint your water supply and impair your health.

1. Do you have a petroleum storage tank(s) on your property?
2. Is your petroleum storage tank less than 100 feet from a water supply, or underground?
3. Do you lack containment for leaks or spills from your petroleum storage tank?
4. Do you need a method of record keeping to keep track of petroleum use?

If you answered “yes” or you do not know the answer to any of these questions, use this worksheet to address those issues. The information will help you develop a voluntary plan of action to reduce the contamination risks to your well.

### 1. Do you have a petroleum storage tank(s) on your land?

If you have a petroleum storage tank on your property, you need to assess your storage system to guard against contamination to your water supply.

Tanks that are no longer in use should be removed from the property. Consult with your local regulatory agency before you modify your current system or remove a petroleum tank.

### 2. Is your petroleum storage tank less than 100 feet from your well, or underground?

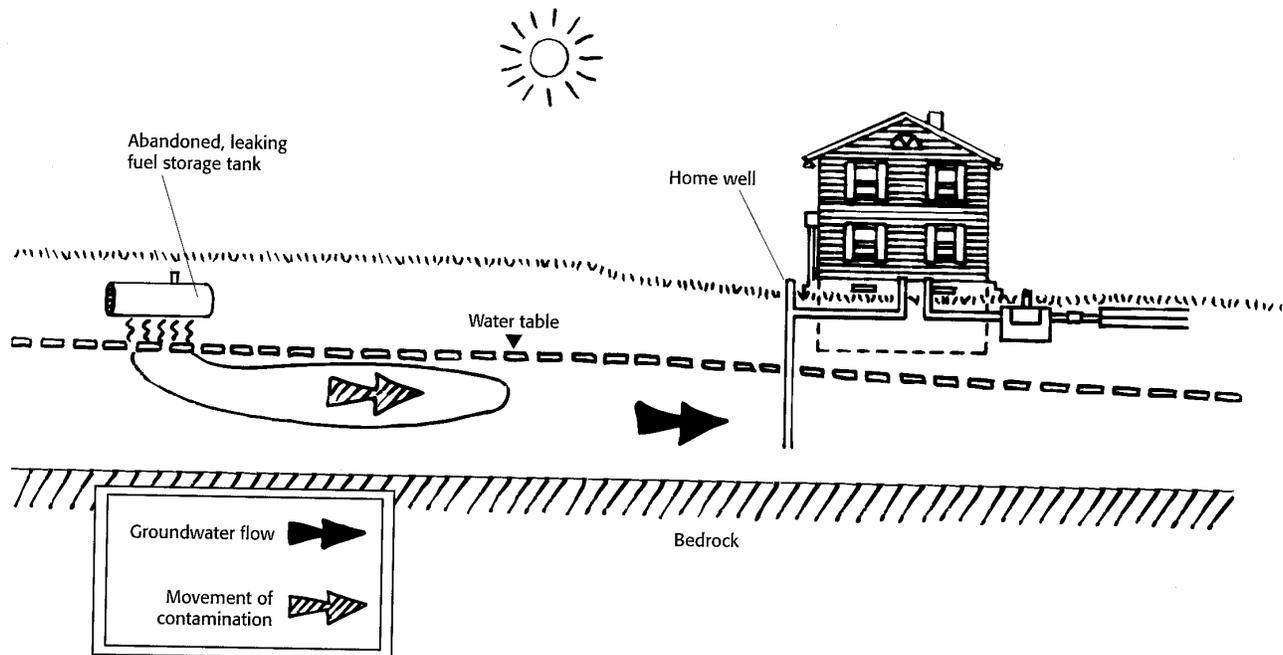
Your petroleum storage system should be located a minimum of 100 feet down slope from your well. This helps protect your water supply from both leaks and spills. Underground petroleum tanks that were buried more than 15 years ago are much more likely to pollute ground water. These tanks are usually made of steel and contain little or no protection to prevent corrosion. Corrosive conditions such as salts, moisture, or acidic soils can increase the rate of erosion on these tanks. Remove these tanks to avoid the potential liability of environmental contamination. If you have any questions about procedures and assistance in the removal or repair of a leaking tank, consult your state regulatory agency.

### 3. Do you lack containment for leaks or spills from your petroleum storage tanks?

Whether you have underground or above-ground storage you need to develop a system that guards against leaks and spills. Equipment should be fueled on a concrete pad that has secondary containment. All facilities should be secured from children, pets, and vandalism. In addition, above-ground tanks should be made of high quality steel and have a secondary containment system that holds at least 125 percent of the total volume stored.

### 4. Do you need a method of record keeping to keep track of petroleum use?

Monitoring your fuel delivery and usage can help you detect leaks, especially in underground tanks. This does not require much time or money and helps you detect leaks in your tank before significant losses of fuel occur. An easy way to monitor fuel use is to have a pre-marked stick to measure the fuel in your tank. Check the level of fuel in the tank before you withdraw fuel, to ensure the level in the tank has not changed since your last use. If the level changes between withdrawals, then your tank may be leaking.



## Glossary

### *corrosion*

the process of weakening or destroying due to chemical action, for example, rusting of underground petroleum storage tanks

### *ground water*

all water below the surface of the land; ground water usually refers to subsurface water in a zone of saturation that can be pumped from a well or that flows from a spring or seep

## Contacts

Colorado Department of Labor and Employment,  
Division of Labor, Oil Inspection Program  
(303) 620-4300

# Well\*A\*Syst Worksheets

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Private Drinking Water Well Management  
Cistern Management  
Site Assessment  
Septic System Management  
Household Hazardous Waste Management

Livestock Management  
Fertilizer Management  
Pesticide Management  
Petroleum Storage Management

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Well\*A\*Syst and all other programs of the cooperating agencies are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, marital status or disability.

# Assessing Your Petroleum Storage

If you answered "Yes" or did not know the answer to the previous questions	What to do	Who to call	What you did
1	Develop a maintenance program to check tanks for damage and monitor fuel usage. Remove any unused tanks on your property.	Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, Division of Labor, Oil Inspection Program	
2	Consider moving tank to another location.	Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, Division of Labor, Oil Inspection Program	
3	Develop a secondary containment system.	Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, Division of Labor, Oil Inspection Program	
4	Develop a maintenance program to check tanks for damage and monitor fuel usage. Remove any unused tanks on your property.	Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, Division of Labor, Oil Inspection Program	