



# WITHDRAWAL AND REMOVAL OF STORAGE TANK SYSTEMS

Under the *Storage Tank Systems for Petroleum Products and Allied Petroleum Products Regulations*, there are specific requirements if you withdraw from service or remove a storage tank system or component. This fact sheet summarizes these requirements.

## Tank Tip 9

*on Storage Tank Systems for Petroleum Products and Allied Petroleum Products Regulations*

**Why does Environment and Climate Change Canada have requirements for the withdrawal from service and removal of storage tank systems?**

Whether active or inactive, a storage tank system is always a potential hazard. Taking a system out of service must be done properly to ensure there is no danger to people or the environment. When you withdraw your system from service, or remove it, you must follow the regulations.

**Can anyone permanently withdraw a system from service or remove it?**

No. Some provinces and territories license or certify persons to remove storage tank systems. In these provinces or territories, only such certified or licensed persons can permanently withdraw a system from service, or remove it. In other provinces or territories, this work must be supervised by a professional engineer. For a list of provinces and territories that license or certify persons, please consult our [website](#). You may also need to contact the relevant provincial and territorial bodies.

**What is the difference between a temporary and permanent withdrawal from service?**

A temporary withdrawal lasts less than two years. If you withdraw a system from service for two years or more, it is considered permanent.



### What must you do to temporarily withdraw a system from service?

Section 43 of the regulations gives the requirements for temporarily removing either a system or a component of a system from service. You must:

- ensure that the cathodic protection (if present) is maintained and operated during the entire period the system is withdrawn;
- attach a label to the system's fill pipe saying that the system is temporarily out of service. This is to prevent a supplier from mistakenly filling a system that has been withdrawn from service for repairs, for example;
- keep a record of the date you withdrew the tank or component from service.

### What must you do before bringing the system or component back into service?

If your system (or component of the system) has been withdrawn from service for more than a year, you must inspect it or test it for leaks before returning it to service. The test you do will depend on the tank type:

- **Underground tanks** (except vertically oriented underground tanks) or **shop-fabricated aboveground tanks** require a tank precision leak detection test (section 21).
- **Field-erected aboveground tanks** or **vertically oriented underground tanks** require an inspection of the floor [subsection 43(c)].

### What must you do to permanently withdraw a system from service?

In accordance with section 44, the withdrawal must be done by a person approved to do the work in the province or territory or, if there is none in a given province or territory, supervised by a professional engineer. You must also keep a record (for example, an invoice) to prove that such a person did the work, along with a record of the date the withdrawal took place. In addition, you must ensure that:

- all the liquids and sludge are properly removed and disposed;
- the tank is purged (emptied) of vapour to less than 10% of the lower flammability limit, and the presence of vapour is checked with a combustible gas meter;
- the withdrawal is done in such a way that it poses no short- or long-term threat to the environment or to human health or safety;
- a label is attached to the fill pipe saying that the tank system is permanently out of service;

- Environment and Climate Change Canada is notified within 60 days that the system has been withdrawn from service. The easiest way to do this is by updating your tank system identification file through our Federal Identification Storage Tank System Registry (FIRSTS) at [www.ec.gc.ca/rs-st](http://www.ec.gc.ca/rs-st).

### Do you have to remove a tank that has been permanently withdrawn from service?

If you permanently withdraw a tank system from service, you are required to remove the system. The removal must be done by an approved person in a given province or territory or supervised by a professional engineer if there are no persons approved to do so. The tank system owner/operator must keep a record showing that an approved person removed the system or the removal was supervised by a professional engineer.

### After permanent withdrawal, what parts (tanks, piping and components) must be removed?

Under the regulations, you are required to remove storage tank systems and their components if you permanently withdraw them from service. The requirements for removal depend on the tank type:

- For **underground tanks** and **shop-fabricated aboveground tanks**, you must remove all tanks, piping and components.
- For **field-erected aboveground tanks**, you must remove all piping and components outside the tanks. The tanks themselves may remain in place if the storage tank system is emptied and cleaned to the requirements in the regulations.

### What records must be kept when you withdraw or remove a system or component?

(See *Tank Tip 10 – Record Keeping for Your Storage Tank System*)

You must keep the following records for five years:

- Temporary withdrawal: a record of the date you withdrew the system or component.
- Permanent withdrawal: a record that includes the date the system was withdrawn and shows that the withdrawal was done by a person approved to do so under the regulations.
- Removal: a record showing that the removal was done by a person approved to do so under the regulations.





For more information, please visit our website at [www.ec.gc.ca/rs-st](http://www.ec.gc.ca/rs-st). If the information you need is not available on our website, please contact your regional office or the Storage Tank Program:

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Prairie & Northern	<a href="mailto:ec.promconrpn-compropnr.ec@canada.ca">ec.promconrpn-compropnr.ec@canada.ca</a>	780-951-8600
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