



## Real Estate

**Q: What should I do if I have a heating oil tank on my residential property and I'm not using it anymore?**

**A:** Many local governments require homeowners to decommission oil tanks when they are no longer in use. For example, under the Seattle Fire Code, homeowners must remove tanks that have been out of service for a year or more or abandon them in place and fill them with inert material, like sand, concrete slurry, or foam. A homeowner cannot start decommissioning a tank in Seattle until the fire department issues a permit, and decommissioning must be performed, or directly supervised, by an individual certified by the International Code Council. A tank owner may be liable under the Washington State Model Toxics Control Act for cleanup of environmental contamination if the tank leaked prior to decommissioning, so it is important for homeowners to promptly decommission unused tanks to minimize this risk.

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