

Underground Heating Oil Tank Cleanup Reimbursement Program

Frequently Asked Questions

Below is a list of frequently asked questions regarding the Underground Heating Oil Tank Cleanup Reimbursement Program.

1. Why is a W-9 form required as part of the application package?

The U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requires DEP to collect information on the W-9 form for applicants who receive reimbursement under this program. The IRS considers these reimbursements as income for federal income tax purposes. Applicants who receive a reimbursement check will be mailed an IRS Form 1099 at the end of the tax year in which the reimbursement was issued.

2. Does the application form have to be notarized?

No. However, the application form and IRS W-9 form must have original signatures. Application forms and W-9 forms without original signatures will be returned to the applicant.

3. Do I have to report my leaking heating oil tank to DEP?

If the released heating oil has polluted or could potentially pollute groundwater or surface water, it must be reported to DEP. Since most heating oil releases to the environment have the potential to pollute groundwater or surface water, nearly all releases must be reported.

4. How do I report a heating oil release?

Releases should be reported to the DEP regional office serving the county in which the tank is located. The DEP regional office can help with information on cleaning up the release and obtaining cleanup liability protection. A list of DEP regional offices and the counties they serve is available in the [Information and Instructions](#) section of the application packet and on the DEP website at www.dep.pa.gov, search term: Regional Office Locations. This information is also available by calling 717-787-0886.

5. Do I have to clean up environmental contamination resulting from my heating oil release?

Yes.

6. Do I have to use a DEP-certified contractor?

The use of a certified contractor is not required if the tank was used for heating on the premises. However, if you choose to use a certified contractor, the following link will direct you to the [Certified Storage Tank Companies Search](#) that is maintained on the DEP website. The UMR certification category is for underground storage tank closure and removal.

7. I have a partially buried leaking tank. Is this tank eligible for the program?

If 10% or more of the volume of the tank (including the volume of the underground pipes connected to it) is buried beneath the surface of the ground, the tank is eligible, provided it meets the other requirements of the program.

8. I have a leaking tank that stands on the floor in my basement. Is this tank eligible for the program?

No. The tank must be buried in the ground to be eligible for this program.

9. Are charges for preparation of cleanup reports or closure reports eligible for reimbursement?

Cleanup reports or closure reports associated with underground heating oil tank removal or closure and environmental cleanup are eligible for reimbursement if the report is submitted to DEP or, in certain cases, to the local municipality.

10. Are contractor administrative fees, including fees charged for preparation and submission of the reimbursement application, eligible for reimbursement?

No.

11. Are permit fees eligible for reimbursement?

Permit fees for removal or closure of a leaking tank and for environmental cleanup are eligible for reimbursement.

Permit fees for installation of a new tank or heating system or for other work not related to leaking tank removal or closure or environmental cleanup are not eligible for reimbursement.

12. Are charges for re-landscaping and re-paving eligible for reimbursement?

Charges for restoration of contaminated areas by backfilling, grading and basic re-vegetation, such as seeding to stabilize soil, are eligible.

DEP cannot reimburse for costs to re-landscape or re-pave areas disturbed by tank removal or environmental cleanup.

13. Is the use of bioremediation materials an eligible expense under the Underground Heating Oil Tank Cleanup Reimbursement Program?

Costs associated with the use of bioremediation amendments to address petroleum contaminated media may be eligible for reimbursement, depending on site-specific circumstances. To evaluate whether the environmental conditions are suitable for *in-situ* (in place) bioremediation and to measure effectiveness, pre- and post-application soil samples may be necessary. Property owners considering a bioremediation program should contact their respective DEP regional office for guidance on applicability and information required to determine eligibility. A list of DEP regional offices and the counties they serve is available in the [Information and Instructions](#) section of the application packet and on the DEP website at www.dep.pa.gov, search term: Regional Office Locations.

For additional information and answers to eligibility questions, consult the [Information and Instructions](#) section of the application packet, or call the DEP Bureau of Environmental Cleanup and Brownfields at 717-787-0886 or email tankcleanup@pa.gov.