

domestic oil storage

This easy guide applies to oil storage tanks up to 3,500 litres capacity supplying single family dwellings.

For information on larger tanks, or non domestic sites such as churches or village halls, please refer to the OFTEC Easy Guide for Non Domestic Oil Storage.

Depending on where you live, regulations may vary slightly. The information here is a general guide, and you should check with your nearest OFTEC Registered Technician which regulations affect you.

All about tanks

Modern oil storage tanks come in all shapes and sizes, and can be made from steel or plastic. The size and type that your OFTEC Registered Technician recommends will depend on your individual requirements.

It's important to choose a tank that meets minimum standards such as the OFCERT scheme, and you can find a list of tank manufacturers in the equipment directory on the OFTEC website at www.oftec.org

Protecting the environment

To minimise the risk of pollution from an oil spill, some installations must have secondary containment (a bund). This can either be an integrally banded tank, or a separate construction around the tank. The bund must be capable of holding 110% of the tanks contents.

Your OFTEC Registered Technician will be able to advise whether you need a banded tank using a standard risk

assessment procedure. Typically, installations near a river, well or any controlled water require bunding.

In addition, modern tanks manufactured to OFTEC Tank Standards OFS T100 or T200 all have a gauge to measure the contents and overflow protection as standard – to minimise any risk of waste or spillage.

Safe oil storage

It's very unlikely that a fire could be started by a domestic oil storage tank and it's contents. However, it needs to be protected from a fire that originates nearby.

For example, tanks should be sited:

- 1.8m away from non-fire rated eaves of a building
- 1.8m away from a non-fire building or structure (eg garden sheds)
- 1.8m away from appliance flue terminals
- 760 mm away from a non-fire rated boundary such as a wooden boundary fence
- 1.8m away from openings (such as doors or windows) in a fire rated building or structure (eg. brick built house/garage).

If it's impossible to comply with these requirements, then a fire rated barrier of at least 30 minutes should be provided, extending 300mm higher and wider than both ends of the tank.

It's important that oil storage tanks are inspected annually, preferably by an OFTEC Registered Technician.





Back to bases

Proper support is vital for your tank, which will be very heavy once it's full of oil. Steel tanks should be supported off the ground by purpose built masonry piers or may be supplied with steel supports. Depending on the type of installation, plastic tanks can sit at ground level, but must be supported adequately by a proper, level base. Your OFTEC Registered Technician can advise on individual requirements.

Building regulations

Oil storage tank installations need to comply with regional Building Regulations. In England & Wales, OFTEC Registered Technicians can self certify their own work without involving Local Authority Building Control. But if you choose to use someone who isn't registered with a 'Competent Person' scheme like OFTEC, then you will have to obtain a Building Control Notice and arrange for an inspection which can be costly and time consuming.

Similar rules apply in Scotland where you may need to apply for a warrant. Your OFTEC Registered Technician can advise you on this.

Annual Inspection

It is important that oil storage tanks are inspected annually preferably by an OFTEC Registered Technician.

Internal domestic oil storage

In some situations, the oil storage tank can be sited inside a building such as a garage or outhouse. For those installations, the tank must be self contained within a 60 minute rated fire chamber, with a self closing door that opens outwards, and is openable from the inside without the use of a key. In addition, the tank should be bunded.

Finding an OFTEC Registered Technician

The OFTEC website enables you to locate your nearest Registered Technicians by postcode. OFTEC Registered Technicians are appropriately qualified and insured to work in your home. They can also advise on energy efficiency for your home.

You can also find a list of local Registered Technicians under the OFTEC logo in the 'Heating Engineers' section of your local pages.

For further information on oil heating and cooking, please see www.oftec.org



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