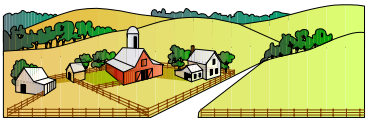


Worksheet #4
Assessing the Risk of Groundwater Contamination from

Petroleum Product Storage

Why should I be concerned?

Above-ground and underground storage of liquid petroleum products such as motor fuel and heating fuel presents a threat to public health and the environment. Nearly one out of every four underground storage tanks in the United States may now be leaking, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. If an underground petroleum tank is more than 20 years old, especially if it's not protected against corrosion, the potential for leaking increases dramatically. Newer tanks and piping can leak, too, especially if they weren't installed properly.

Even a small gasoline leak of one drop per second can result in the release of about 400 gallons of gasoline into the groundwater in one year. Even a few quarts of gasoline in the groundwater may be enough to severely pollute a farmstead's drinking water. At low levels of contamination, fuel contaminants in water cannot be detected by smell or taste, yet the seemingly pure water may be contaminated to the point of affecting human health.

Preventing tank spills and leaks is especially important because of how rapidly gasoline, diesel and fuel oil can move through surface layers and into groundwater. Also, vapors from an underground leak that collect in basements, sumps or other underground structures have the potential to explode. Selling property with an old underground tank may also be difficult.

Petroleum fuels contain a number of potentially toxic compounds, including common solvents, such as benzene, toluene and xylene, and additives, such as methylterbutyl ether (MTBE). Also, benzene is considered a human carcinogen.

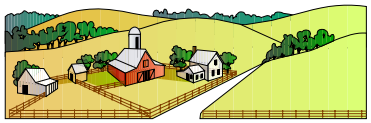
This worksheet focuses on storage of gasoline, kerosene and liquid heating fuels. It does not apply to LP (liquid propane) gas, since leaks vaporize quickly and do not threaten groundwater.

The goal of Farm?A?Syst is to help you protect the groundwater that supplies your drinking water.

How will this worksheet help me protect my groundwater?

- It will take you step by step through your petroleum product storage practices.
- It will rank your activities according to how they might affect the groundwater that provides your drinking water supplies.
- It will provide you with easy-to-understand rankings that will help you analyze the risk level of your petroleum product storage practices.
- It will help you determine which of your practices are reasonably safe and effective, and which practices might require modification to better protect your drinking water.
- It will take you 15-30 minutes to complete this worksheet and figure out your risk ranking for petroleum storage practices.

Glossary
Petroleum Product Storage



These terms may help you make more accurate assessments when completing Worksheet#4. They may also help clarify some of the terms used in Fact Sheet #4.

Cathodic protection: One of several techniques to prevent corrosion of a metal surface by reversing the electric current that causes corrosion. A tank system can be protected by sacrificial anodes or impressed current. (See sacrificial anodes and impressed current.)

Corrosion: Deterioration of a metallic material (rust) due to a reaction with its environment. Damage to tanks by corrosion is caused when a metal underground tank and its underground surroundings act like a battery. Part of the tank can become negatively charged, and another part positively charged. Moisture in the soil provides the connecting link that finally turns these tank batteries on. Then, the negatively charged part of the underground tank system -- where the current exits from the tank or its piping -- begins to deteriorate. As electric current passes through this part, the hard metal begins to turn into soft ore, holes form, and leaks begin.

Corrosion protection: Any method to stop the process of corrosion. One method of corrosion protection is cathodic protection. Steel tanks can be protected by coating them with a corrosion-resistant coating combined with cathodic protection. Steel underground tanks can also be protected from corrosion if they are bonded to a thick layer of noncorrosive material, such as fiberglass-reinforced plastic. Also, the corrosion problem can be entirely avoided by using tanks and piping made completely of noncorrodible material, such as fiberglass.

Galvanized: The result of coating an iron or steel structure with zinc. Galvanized materials do not meet corrosion protection requirements.

Impressed current: This protection system introduces an electric current into the ground through a series of anodes that are not attached to the underground tank. Because the electric current flowing from these anodes to the tank system is greater than the corrosive current attempting to flow from it, the underground tank is protected from corrosion.

Interior liner: A liner for petroleum storage tanks made of noncorrosive synthetic materials that can be effective in protecting metal tanks.

Inventory control: Measuring and comparing the volume of tank contents regularly with product delivery and withdrawal records to help detect leaks before major problems develop.

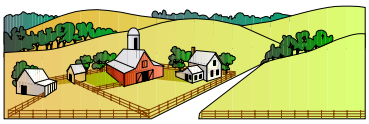
Sacrificial anodes: Pieces of metal attached directly to an underground tank that are more electrically active than the steel tank. Because the anodes are more active, electric current runs from the anodes rather than from the tank. The tank becomes the cathode (positive electrode) and is protected from corrosion. The attached anode (negative electrode) is sacrificed or consumed in the corrosion process.

Secondary containment: A system such as a sealed basin and dike that will catch and hold the contents of a tank if it leaks or ruptures.

Soil permeability: The quality that enables soil to transmit water or air. Slowly permeable soils have fine-textured materials like clays that permit only slow water movement. Moderately or highly permeable soils have coarse-textured materials like sands that permit rapid water movement.

Spill and overfill protection: Spill protection usually consists of a catch basin for collecting spills when the tank is filled. Overfill protection is a warning or prevention of an overfill, such as an automatic shutoff or buzzer. These precautions can prevent a number of small releases over a very long period of time from polluting the groundwater.

Tank tightness testing: A procedure for testing a tank's ability to prevent accidental release of any stored substance into the environment, or intrusion of groundwater into an underground tank.



Worksheet #4
Assessing the Risk of Groundwater Contamination from

Petroleum Product Storage

Landowner/Producer's Name: _____ Farm, Tract and Field No. _____

Farm Name: _____ Evaluator's Name: _____

Site Location: _____

Site Diagram

Notes:

Important: Any tract with an underground storage tank (UST) (unless it is double walled, or single walled with cathodic protection, or is registered with the State of Vermont UST Program) or a UST being used or re-used above ground shall not meet VT RMS Quality Criteria.

Petroleum Product Storage

Resource Concern	Rank 4	Rank 3	Rank 2	Rank 1	Field Number ☐☐☐☐☐
LOCATION (all tanks)					
Position of tank in relation to drinking water well	Tank downslope more than 100 feet from well in medium- or fine-textured soils (silt loam, loam, clay loams, silty clay) with low permeability.*	Tank at grade or upslope more than 100 feet from well in medium- or fine-textured soils (silt loam, loam, clay loams, silty clay) with low permeability.*	Tank downslope more than 100 feet from well in coarse-textured soil (sands, sandy loam) with high permeability.*	Tank at grade or upslope less than 100 feet from private well, 200 feet from public well in coarse-textured soil (sand, sandy loams) with high permeability.*	☐☐☐☐☐
Underground tank corrosion potential	Well-drained soils. Water table always beneath tank.	Moderately well-drained soils. Only occasionally high water table.	Medium- or fine-textured soils (silt loams, loam, clay loams, silty clay) saturated seasonally.	Located in area with fine-textured soils (clay loams, silty clay) often saturated.	☐☐☐☐☐
Aboveground fire and physical damage		Aboveground tank more than 50 feet from buildings.	Aboveground tank located less than 50 feet from buildings.	Aboveground tank located next to buildings.	
DESIGN AND INSTALLATION					
Type and age of tank/corrosion protection	Fiberglass tank or tank protected from rust by cathodic protection.	Steel tank less than 15 years old, coated with paint or asphalt.	Coated steel tank 15 or more years old. **OR** bare steel tank less than 15 years old.	Bare steel tank 15 or more years old.	☐☐☐☐☐
Spill and tank overfill protection	Impermeable catch basin plus overfill alarm.	Impermeable catch basin or concrete catch pad.	Impermeable catch basin or concrete catch pad in need of repair.	No protection.	☐☐☐☐☐
Piping	Piping protected from rust by cathodic protection and electrically isolated from tank, sloped back to tank. Check valve at pump (not at tank).	Piping galvanized but not electrically isolated from tank. Pipe drains back to tank. Check valve at pump.	Pipe galvanized, not electrically isolated or bare. Piping sloped back to tank, but check valve is located at tank (foot valve).	Piping and tank electrically isolated and of dissimilar materials. Unisolated pipe bare, cannot drain freely to the tank.	☐☐☐☐☐

Your Rank

Petroleum Product Storage

Resource Concern	Rank 4	Rank 3	Rank 2	Rank 1	Field Number ☐☐☐☐☐
Tank installation	Installed by professional tank installers.	Installed according to recommendations provided with new tank by seller.	No information on installation.	Installed by untrained individual not following manufacturers recommendations.	☐☐☐☐☐
DESIGN AND INSTALLATION (above-ground tanks only)					
Tank enclosure	Tank surrounded by 6-foot tall noncombustible building or fence with lock. Building well-ventilated. Fire-wall in place if setbacks do not conform to code.	Tank surrounded by low fence with lock. Fire wall in place if setbacks do not conform to code.	Tank surrounded by low fence. No lock. No firewall.	No enclosure.	☐☐☐☐☐
Secondary containment	Tank placed within concrete or synthetic dike with pad able to hold 125% of tank capacity.	Tank placed within dike and pad made of low permeability soils, able to hold 125% of tank capacity.	Tank placed on pad.	No secondary containment.	☐☐☐☐☐
MONITORING (all tanks)					
Tank integrity testing and leak detection monitoring[1]	Regular (monthly) leak monitoring.	Daily inventory control and annual tank tightness testing.	Occasional inventory control and annual tank tightness testing.	No inventory control, testing or monitoring.	☐☐☐☐☐

[1]Underground farm tanks of less than 1,100 gallons are exempt from the underground storage tank regulations. Underground farm tanks larger than 1,100 gallons are subject to the same rules as those in gas stations. (For example: The tank must be registered with the Department of Environmental Conservation Underground Storage Tank

Petroleum Product Storage

Resource Concern	Rank 4	Rank 3	Rank 2	Rank 1	Field Number
TANK CLOSURE (underground tanks)					
Unused tank[2]	Tank taken from ground. Excavation checked for evidence or contamination.	Tank removed or filled with sand. Excavation not checked for contamination.	Empty tank left in ground.	Tank with product left in ground.	☐☐☐☐☐

Program, recorded in the town land records, monitored for leaks and upgraded in 1998, if necessary.)

[2]Regardless of size or ownership, underground fuel tanks must be taken from the ground within 12 months of when they are no longer used.

What do I do with these rankings?

Step 1: Begin by determining your overall well management risk ranking. Total the rankings for the categories you completed and divide by the number of categories you ranked:

_____ divided by _____ equals *	
Rankings total from previous page	number of risk ranking categories ranked (11 if ranked all)

*Carry your answer out to one decimal place.

Example:
26 ÷11 = 2.36
Use 2.4.

Risk Ranking Description

3.6 - 4.0 = low risk
2.6 - 3.5 = low to moderate risk
1.6 - 2.5 = moderate to high risk
1.0 - 1.5 = high risk

This ranking gives you an idea of how your well condition, **as a whole**, might be affecting your drinking water. This ranking should serve only as a **very general guide, not a precise diagnosis.** Because it represents an **averaging** of many individual rankings, it can overlook any **individual** rankings (such as 1's or 2's) that should be of concern. (Step 2 will focus on individually ranked activities of concern.)

Enter your boxed well condition ranking in the appropriate place in the table on the front of Worksheet #12. Later you will compare this risk ranking with other farmstead management rankings. Worksheet #11 will help you determine your farmstead's site conditions (soil type, soil depth, and bedrock characteristics), and worksheet #12 will show you how these site conditions affect your risk rankings.

Step 2: Look over your rankings for individual activities.

- **4's - Best:** low-risk practices
- **3's - Provide reasonable groundwater protection:** low- to moderate-risk prac-tices
- **2's - Possibly inadequate protection:** moderate- to high-risk practices
- **1's - Inadequate protection with relatively high groundwater contamination risk:** high-risk practices

Regardless of your overall risk of ranking, any rankings of "1" require immediate attention. You can take care of some of the concerns right away; others could be major or costly projects, requiring planning and prioritizing before you take action.

Find any activities that you identified as 1's and list them under "High-Risk Activities"on Worksheet #12.

Step 3: Read Fact Sheet #2, "*Improving Pesticide Handling and Storage*," and give some thought to how you might modify your farmstead practices to better protect your drinking water.

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Technical reviewers: Lynn Blouin, Franklin County NRCD; Sid Bosworth, UVM Extension; Jim Leland, VT. Dept. of Agriculture, Food & Markets; Ellen Sivret, USDA NRCS; Heather Trillium, Winooski NRCD; Barbara Ann Trowbridge, USDA FSA.

Coordinator: Heather Trillium, Winooski NRCD.

Steering Committee: Craig Altemose, University of Vermont Extension; Jon Anderson, VT. Natural Resources Conservation Council; Lynn Blouin, Franklin County Natural Resources Conservation District; Sid Bosworth, University of Vermont Extension; Gail Center, VT. Department of Health; Jeff Comstock, VT. Dept. of Agriculture, Food & Markets; Rob Farley, VT. Department of Environmental Conservation; Don Hipes, Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District; Elizabeth Hunt, VT. Department of Environmental Conservation; Dan Koloski, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; John Miller, VT. Department of Environmental Conservation; George Mills, VT. Department of Health; Pauline Pare, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Ellen Sivret, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Bill Snow, University of Vermont Extension; Heather Trillium, Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District; Barbara Ann Trowbridge, USDA Farm Service Agency; Art Webb, Franklin County Natural Resources Conservation District.

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