



Maryland
Department of
the Environment

FACTS ABOUT: RESIDENTIAL HEATING OIL TANK SITE CLEANUP REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

The Oil Contaminated Site Environmental Cleanup Fund was established by law to fund the Residential Heating Oil Tank Site Cleanup Reimbursement Program. The purpose of the program is to reimburse owners of heating oil storage tanks (aboveground and underground storage tanks) for eligible spill cleanup costs. Some of the highlights of the program are:

- Certain cleanup costs from leaking residential aboveground or underground heating oil tanks may be reimbursed
- A maximum of \$20,000, less a \$500 deductible, may be reimbursed to owners of residential tanks for eligible expenses
- Only the owner of a residential heating oil tank may apply for reimbursement for site rehabilitation costs

In order to apply to the program for reimbursement, the owner must:

- Submit a complete and accurate application on a form supplied by the Department
- The application must be submitted within six months after the completion of rehabilitation
- Submit certain analytical sampling data and disposal receipts
- Certify to the Department that the discharge is not the result of a willful or deliberate act
- Be in substantial compliance with all Maryland laws and regulations applicable to residential oil storage tanks

If an application is approved, a Residential Heating Oil Tank Site Cleanup Reimbursement Program Form must be completed and submitted with invoices and proof of payment for eligible costs (i.e. copies of cancelled checks showing front and back of the check, credit card statements, signed affidavits). The deductible of \$500.00 must be satisfied, and the Department shall reimburse an applicant for the following site rehabilitation costs if they are cost effective, reasonable, and consistent with the Department's requirements:

- Soil treatment, including excavation, transportation, proper disposal of oil contaminated soils, on-site treatment such as soil vapor extraction
- Tank removal necessary to accomplish soil treatment
- Groundwater remediation equipment and installation, including soil vapor extraction equipment
- Subsurface investigation, well bailing, recovery system design, operation, monitoring, or a combination of these activities
- Domestic well replacement
- Odor abatement activities, such as forced venting and petroleum saturated material removal, replacement, or restoration to a degree as determined by the Department to return the dwelling to a habitable condition



The following cleanup costs are **not** eligible for reimbursement (please note this is not a comprehensive list):

- Cleanup costs for heating oil systems prior to July 1, 2005
- Cleanup costs for oil spills that do not originate from a residential heating oil tank
- In most cases, the abandonment in place of an underground heating oil tank
- Costs associated with an upgrade or replacement of an oil storage system
- Third party claims
- Most environmental cleanup costs that have been paid or are payable under an insurance policy

An owner of a residential heating oil tank may apply to the program as follows:

- Once for the entire period of home ownership
- Once per State fiscal year if the heating oil tank is not located at the primary home of the owner

The following criteria are used by the Department in establishing whether a site can be approved for reimbursement:

- An immediate or substantial threat to human health or the environment
- A site located within 1/2 mile of an individual water supply system
- A site located within an approved well head protection zone of a community water supply system
- A site located within 200 feet of an underground utility or surface water body and if there is or has been at least 1/8 inch of free phase oil on the groundwater
- A site located within a zone that will create an odor of a petroleum product within a dwelling

NOTE TO POTENTIAL APPLICANTS: *There is currently a significant wait time of up to several years for applicants to receive reimbursements through the Residential Heating Oil Tank Site Cleanup Reimbursement Program.* Revenue to the program is generated by a fee assessed on each barrel of oil when it is first transferred within Maryland. COMAR 26.10.14.08C states that “subject to the availability of revenues within the Oil Contaminated Site Environmental Clean-up Fund, the Department shall approve reimbursement allocations for approved applications in order of their numerical ranking.” The Department processes each approved application as funds become available. Please note that the funding received each quarter may not be sufficient to reimburse applications submitted and approved within any quarter, and there is currently a list of applications awaiting reimbursement. To check on the status of your application, please call (410) 537-3676.

For further information or an application, please contact the Maryland Department of the Environment at 410-537-3676.