

### Who do the oil storage regulations affect?

If you store oil above ground in containers over 200 litres at an industrial, commercial or institutional site, then these regulations affect you. Sites they cover include factories, shops, offices, hotels, schools, churches, public sector buildings and hospitals. The regulations apply only in England.

### Why do we need oil storage regulations?

Over one-sixth of all pollution incidents affecting the environment involve oil. Most incidents are caused by oil leaking from tanks or pipework or tanks being over-filled. The regulations help us stop these incidents by requiring tank owners to provide a secondary containment facility, such as a bund or drip tray, to prevent oil escaping into the environment.

Oil is toxic to plants and animals; even a small amount of oil can destroy river life. It forms a thin film on the water surface and stops oxygen getting to plants and animals. Oil spilt on the ground can pollute underground waters making them unfit for use and it is very expensive to clean up.

The Control of Pollution (Oil Storage) (England) Regulations 2001 aim to reduce the number of oil pollution incidents. By meeting the requirements of the Regulations you will be storing your oil safely, legally and reducing the risk of a potentially costly pollution incident.

### What you need to do

If your oil store is in England:

- ◆ check your oil storage to see if it meets the requirements of the Oil Storage Regulations set out below
- ◆ contact us if you need help



If you have custody or control of an oil store that does not meet the Regulations' requirements you could be liable for a fine of up to £5,000 at a magistrates court.

### Which types of oil are covered?

All types of oil, with the exception of waste mineral oil, are covered by these regulations. This includes petrol, diesel, vegetable, synthetic and mineral oils. Waste mineral oil storage is covered by the Waste Management Licensing Regulations. In the case of flammable liquids, such as petrol, other health and safety requirements also apply.



### What are the standards?

Tanks, drums or other containers must be strong enough to hold the oil without leaking or bursting.

If possible, the oil container must be positioned away from any vehicle traffic to avoid damage from collision.

Secondary containment, such as a bund or drip tray, must be provided to catch any oil leaks from the container or its ancillary pipework and equipment.

The secondary containment must be sufficient to contain at least 110% of the maximum contents of an oil tank, mobile bowser or Intermediate bulk container (IBCs). Drip trays for drums must be able to hold at least 25% of the drum volume.

Where more than one container is stored, the secondary containment should be capable of storing 110% of the largest container or 25% of the total storage capacity, whichever is the greater.

The secondary containment base and walls must be impermeable to water and oil.

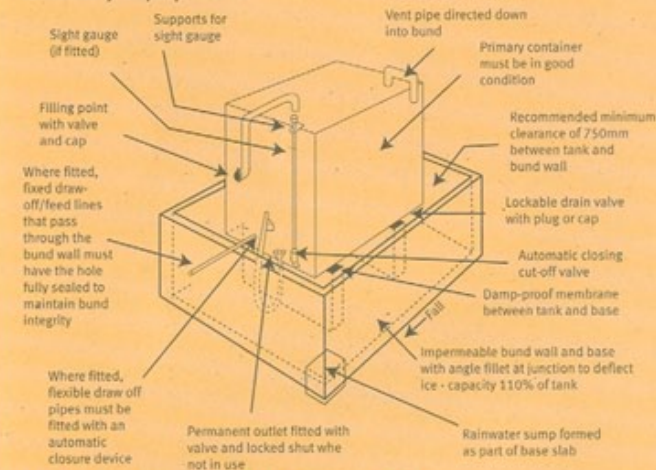
Any valve, filter, sight gauge, vent pipe or other ancillary equipment must be kept within the secondary containment when not in use.

No drainage valve may be fitted to the secondary containment for draining out rainwater.

Above-ground pipework should be properly supported.

Underground pipework should be protected from physical damage and have adequate leakage detection. If you are installing pipes with mechanical joints, they must be easy to inspect.

Other requirements are included in the regulations relating to sight gauges, fill points, vent pipes, pumps, deliveries to your oil storage and other ancillary equipment.



### The regulations do not apply to:

- ◆ waste mineral oil storage as covered by the Waste Management Licensing Regulations
- ◆ premises used wholly or mainly as a private dwelling where 3,500 litres or less are stored (you should check if the Building Regulations – Approved Document J applies to your domestic installation)
- ◆ premises used for refining oil or its onward distribution

- ◆ any oil container stored in a building or wholly underground
- ◆ agricultural oil storage at farms – this comes under the Control of Pollution (Silage, Slurry and Agricultural Fuel Oil) Regulations 1991, which set comparable standards

#### When do the regulations come into effect?

Since 1 September 2005, the regulations have applied to all oil storage that is not exempt from the requirements. There is no exemption for oil storage in use before 2001.

#### Are drums, IBCs and mobile containers covered?

Yes. The regulations apply to drums greater than 200 litres, IBCs and to mobile bowzers. Many self-bunded bowzers are now available. Those that are not bunded will need to be kept in a bunded area when in use. For single drums, a drip tray with a capacity of 25% is acceptable.

#### How are the regulations enforced?

The Environment Agency is responsible for enforcing these regulations throughout England. If your oil storage facilities are inadequate, we will provide advice and guidance to help you comply. If you fail to act, we can serve an Anti Pollution Works Notice requiring you to bring the facilities up to standard. Failure to comply with a notice is a criminal offence and might result in prosecution.

#### About this leaflet

This leaflet is published by the Environment Agency and Defra. It describes the key points of "The Control of Pollution (Oil Storage) (England) Regulations 2001".

The Regulations set out the requirements to be met for the safe storage of oil in containers above ground. This leaflet does not cover all the details; you should refer to the Regulations themselves to get the full picture – see further information.

#### Further Information

The Environment Agency publishes a range of pollution prevention materials, including a series of Pollution Prevention Guidance notes (PPGs) which give practical advice to help you reduce your risk of causing pollution. PPG 2 Above Ground Oil Storage and PPG 26 Storage and Handling of Drums and Intermediate Bulk Containers are particularly relevant.

More information, including the answers to frequently asked questions, is available at [www.environment-agency.gov.uk/osr](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/osr)

If you require further details, Defra has produced a guidance note on the Regulations which includes the Regulations themselves:  
Guidance note for the Control of Pollution (Oil Storage) (England) Regulations 2001  
This is available from: [www.defra.gov.uk](http://www.defra.gov.uk)

#### general enquiry line

08708 506 506 (Mon-Fri 8-6)

#### incident hotline

0800 80 70 60 (24hrs)

#### floodline

0845 988 1188



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GEHO1205BJUF-E-P



# Be safe with your oil

The control of pollution (oil storage) (England) regulations 2001

