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## Get Your Feet Wet!

*Whether your water comes from a private well or a municipal supply system, protecting its quality is a local responsibility.*

- ★ Know where your drinking water comes from and how it gets to you. Take a tour of your water treatment plant.
- ★ Find out where your watershed or aquifer recharge zone is located. Be alert to land uses that could threaten your water supply.
- ★ Ask the town council if your water system has an alternative supply source in case of contamination.
- ★ Be sure that local zoning supports proper storage of petroleum products and toxic chemicals.
- ★ Attend local planning and zoning meetings; make sure that decisions include water quality protection.



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## Cultivate Clean Water!

*Fertilizer runoff, eroded sediments, septic wastes and pesticide residues are leading causes of water pollution.*

- ★ Have your soil tested; use the right fertilizer at the right time, and don't use more than is needed.
- ★ Use pesticides only when other methods have failed—follow the manufacturer's instructions for use, storage and disposal. Buy only as much as you can use this season.
- ★ Help prevent erosion by planting slopes and resodding bare spots.
- ★ Keep your septic system running properly; keep the tank and leachfield areas clear.
- ★ Don't dispose of trash, lawn clippings, leaves or brush in drainage ditches or on flood control lands.



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## Bank On Clean Water!

*Eroded soils and organic pollutants should be controlled at the water's edge.*

- ★ Don't wash boats or cars where detergent and oil can pollute water.
- ★ Prevent bank and shore erosion by planting trees and shrubs. Build steps or a ramp, not a dirt path, to get to the water.
- ★ Don't be too quick to drain or fill marshes and swamps; they are natural buffers against pollution, erosion and flooding.
- ★ Regrade steep slopes and build retention ponds. Keep natural vegetation on bluffs and dunes.
- ★ Keep off-road vehicles and livestock away from the water's edge.
- ★ Don't dispose of stumps, branches, leaves or grass clippings in or near water.

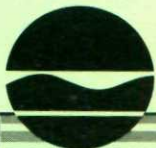




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## Sail Ahead for Clean Water!

*Recreation is more fun if the water is clean. Oil, gasoline and cleaning products, as well as garbage and sewage from boats, can pollute water.*

- ★ **Keep all garbage on board and dispose of it on land. Styrofoam, cans and bottles can injure or kill aquatic life.**
- ★ **Prevent fuel tank overflows. Use great care in handling gasoline and oil around the water.**
- ★ **Observe speed limits; slow down before you reach the speed marker. Boat wakes contribute to shoreline erosion.**
- ★ **Don't dump sewage overboard; wait for proper pumping or disposal facilities.**
- ★ **Scrape and clean your boat well away from the water's edge. Catch scrapings in a drop cloth and discard on land. Scrub your boat down with water alone.**



**You can help avoid tank leak disasters by:**

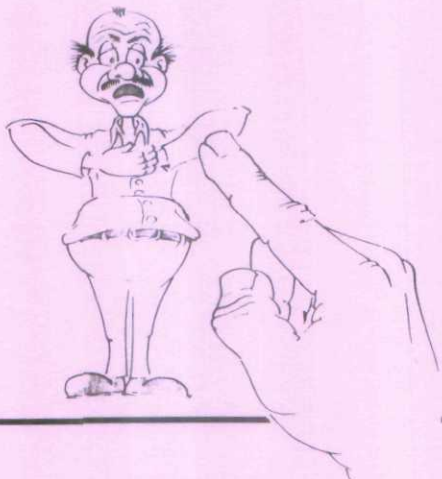
- Checking your above ground tank for corrosion and leaks, especially lines, connections and supports;
- Removing old or unused vent or fill lines;
- Filling your tank only to capacity—do not overfill;
- Checking periodically for unusual drops in your tank's fuel oil level that cannot be explained by usage;
- Replacing your underground bare steel tank with fiberglass tank; and
- Checking your insurance coverage.

**If your tank is leaking call the Spill Hotline Number 1-800-457-7362 and notify your local public safety agency.**



New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

Mario M. Cuomo, Governor    Thomas C. Jorling, Commissioner



## **Leaking Heating Oil Tanks: Homeowner Responsibility**

As a homeowner:

You should know that **you are responsible** if your oil tank leaks.

Whether located above ground, underground or in a cellar, a leaking home oil storage tank can cause considerable, expensive damage. Bare steel tanks, such as those used in residences, can corrode and leak oil into the ground and into groundwater. Many steel tanks are buried in the ground where corrosion and leaks go undetected. **You are liable** for petroleum cleanup costs but you may not be insured. Your homeowner's insurance policy may have a pollution exclusion clause, making you liable for cleanup costs—which can run up to \$40,000 or more.





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## Use Water Wisely!

If we each save a small amount of water each day, our combined savings can add up to millions of gallons each year.

At home...

- ★ Turn off the water when you are not using it—don't let it run while you shave or brush your teeth.
- ★ Fix leaks and drips—often this merely requires changing a washer.
- ★ Use appliances efficiently—run full loads in a dish or clothes washer, or adjust water level.
- ★ Water your yard slowly and only when necessary—early morning is the best time. Mulch your plants. You could cut your outdoor water use in half.
- ★ Reduce the number of toilet flushes—put used tissues or gum wrappers in the wastebasket instead of flushing them away.
- ★ Retrofit your older plumbing fixtures with flow-reducing devices.



## **Saving Water Saves Money!**

Water conservation means making the most efficient use of the supply available—every day, not just during droughts.

In your community...

- ★ Find out how your community supply is managed. Urge your local government or utility owners to invest in system maintenance today rather than paying for costly repairs tomorrow.
- ★ Good water management can postpone or eliminate the need to develop costly new supply sources.
- ★ When leaks are plugged and wasted water is reduced, communities will spend less for drinking water treatment, wastewater processing, energy and equipment.
- ★ Take your water-conserving habits to school or work. If you see water being wasted, speak up! It's costing you money!

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MARIO M. CUOMO, *Governor*  
THOMAS C. JORLING, *Commissioner*