

OIL and WATER

Oil and water are both natural resources, but we all know that they don't mix. Keeping oil and water apart is especially important for those Vermont homes that use well water for drinking supply and store fuel oil for heating.

Fuel Oil Originating deep underground as crude-oil in distant oil-fields, the fuel oil used for home heating in Vermont has been carefully formulated at a refinery, bulk delivered to a regional fuel depot and then brought to your home by one of the 117 fuel oil distributors that serve the state. Home heating fuel oil is typically stored in 200-500 gallon tanks, either outside (above ground or buried) or in a basement. Properly maintained home fuel oil tanks are safe. It is the homeowner's responsibility to periodically check that their furnace works efficiently and that their fuel storage tank has no leaks.



Ground Water

Ground water, replenished naturally by rainfall and snow-melt, is stored safely in sub-surface rock formations. Once a water well has been constructed, water can be pumped up when needed. Home well water often moves from deep underground to the tap in just a few minutes. Most properly constructed private wells safely produce water that can be used without treatment. It is the homeowner's responsibility to periodically check the water quality of their well and the efficiency of their water system.

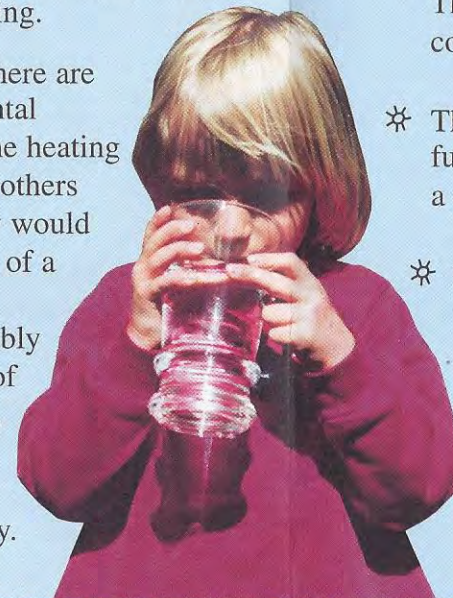


OIL and WATER:

TWO VITAL PRODUCTS THAT MUST BE KEPT APART

DID YOU KNOW?

- ✧ Approximately 50% of homes, farms and businesses in Vermont are independently supplied with drinking water, most from private wells.
- ✧ There are 15 million homes in the U.S. with their own well. Of all states, Vermont is ranked #3 as having the highest percentage of homes using water wells. (Maine is #1, New Hampshire # 2).
- ✧ Approximately 150,000 homes, farms and businesses in Vermont are heated by fuel oil. Nationwide, there are 12 million homes heated by oil.
- ✧ Many Vermont homes have a water well and use fuel oil for heating.
- ✧ Each year in Vermont, there are 30-50 (reported) accidental releases of oil from home heating oil tanks. There may be others that go unreported. How would you even notice the loss of a couple of gallons? One gallon of oil could possibly contaminate thousands of gallons of ground water, including your well, your neighbors' wells and maybe others nearby.



- ✧ Small amounts of fuel oil spilled on the ground are naturally biodegraded by bacteria in the soil. However, spilled fuel oil that enters the soil or rock fractures near a badly sealed casing of a water well could cause problems.
- ✧ Oil tanks can last many years, but a tank that looks great from the outside may be leaking! In some instances (fortunately rare), tanks may even corrode from the inside. This can happen if water vapor condenses inside the tank.
- ✧ The integrity of any tank and its fuel lines can be easily checked by a simple pressure test.
- ✧ Most homeowner insurance policies do not cover onsite clean-up costs from an oil spill or the costs of finding a replacement water source if ground water is affected.

