

Above-Ground Storage Tank Removal

Purpose

This information sheet provides requirements for the removal of above-ground storage tanks (AST) containing flammable or combustible liquids.

Tanks used for private noncommercial or farm dispensing

Any rule of the Commissioner of Public Safety pertaining to the decommissioning of AST used for private dispensing is superseded by MPCA rules. All questions about AST used for private noncommercial dispensing or farm use shall be referred to the MPCA. For applicability see [Minnesota Rules Chapter 7151.1300](#).

AST temporarily out of service (less than 90 days)

MSFC Section 5704.2.13.2 details the requirements of AST that are temporarily (intent to be reopened) out of service (less than 90 days). AST that are out of service for less than 90 days are required to have all connecting lines isolated from the tank and be secured against tampering (MSFC Section 5704.2.13.2.1).

AST out of service for 90 days but less than one year

AST not used for a period of 90 days, but less than one year, shall be safeguarded in accordance with MSFC Section 5704.2.13.1.2 or removed in accordance with MSFC Section 5704.2.14.

The requirements are as follows:

- Flammable or combustible liquids shall be removed from the tank.
- All piping, including fill line, gauge opening, vapor return and pump connection, shall be capped or plugged and secured from tampering.
- Vent lines shall remain open and maintained in accordance with MSFC Sections 5704.2.7.3 and 5704.2.7.4.
 - Exceptions:
 - Tanks and containers connected to oil burners that are not in use during warm seasons of the year or are used as a backup heating system to gas.
 - In-place, active fire protection (foam) system lines.

AST out of service for one year or more

AST that have been out of service for a period of one year or more shall be removed in accordance with MSFC Section 5704.2.14. Abandonment is not an option for AST that are out of service for one year or more.

- Exception: Tanks within operating facilities.



Minnesota Department of Public Safety State Fire Marshal Division

Removal of AST

Removal of AST shall be in accordance with MSFC Section 5704.2.14.1, which says the following:

- Flammable and combustible liquids shall be removed from the tank and connected piping.
- Piping at tank openings that is not to be used further shall be disconnected.
- Piping shall be removed from the ground.
 - Exception: Piping is allowed to be abandoned in place where the fire code official determines that removal is not practical. Abandoned piping shall be capped and safeguarded as required by the fire code official.
- Tank openings shall be capped or plugged, leaving a 1/8" to 1/4" diameter opening for pressure equalization.
- Tanks shall be purged of vapor and made inert prior to removal.
- All exterior above-grade fill and vent piping shall be permanently removed.
 - Exception: Piping associated with bulk plants, terminal facilities and refineries.

Disposal

Tanks shall be disposed of in accordance with federal, state and local regulations. [MSFC Section 5704.2.14.2] See [Minnesota Rule 7151.8200 Subp 2](#) for cleaning requirements and labeling of tank. If properly cleaned the material may be recycled or disposed of.

Additional information

The State Fire Marshal Division (SFMD) does not maintain records of installed or removed tanks in the State of Minnesota. It is not necessary to apply for a permit or report tank removal to the SFMD.

The local fire code official (fire marshal or fire chief) shall be notified before a AST removal is started. Once approval is received it is not necessary to contact or receive approval from the SFMD.

The SFMD does not license or certify AST contractors. Currently the MPCA does not license or certify AST installers, but require them to be knowledgeable of the installation requirements. SFMD inspectors do not witness or inspect AST removal work.

See MPCA website for more information on [above-ground storage tanks](#).

Any questions related to this issue should be directed to the code specialist with the SFMD at 651-201-7221 or you can e-mail questions to fire.code@state.mn.us.

