

THE PROBLEM

Once fuel oil escapes to the environment, it puts groundwater and wildlife at risk. One gallon of home heating oil has the potential to pollute the equivalent of six Olympic-sized swimming pools.

Between 2010 and 2018, an average of 940 releases of home heating oil were reported to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) each year. The total average quantity of home heating oil released each year exceeded 13,000 gallons and the average cost for DEEP to respond to a home heating oil release was approximately \$7,400.

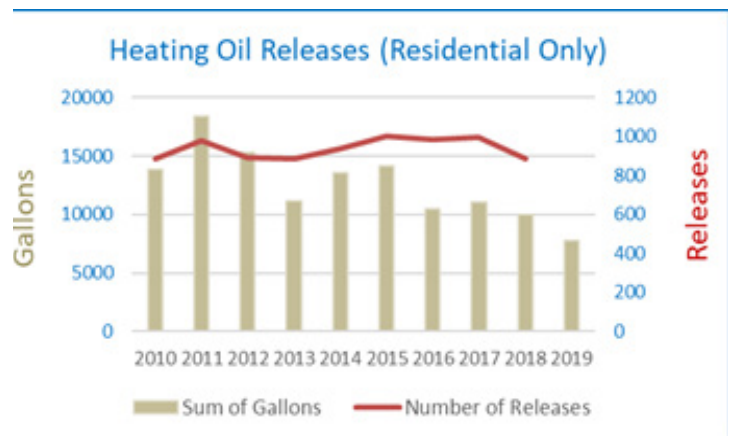
A COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTION

The Connecticut General Assembly needs to adopt policies to reduce the likelihood and severity of home heating oil releases. Recommendations made by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) focus on preventative measures such as education and inspection, which would reduce heating oil releases without placing a financial burden on Connecticut taxpayers.

Connecticut already has resources available to implement tank inspections. The Connecticut Energy Marketers Association (CEMA) offers training and consultation to the industry on best practices to minimize the number of heating oil releases, including routine inspections. Part of the inspection would be to ensure that oil tanks are sound and equipped with shutoff valves and with alarms to alert suppliers when the tank is full.

FAST FACTS

- Residential heating oil tanks are not regulated by DEEP or the EPA.
- The average release of home heating oil was **14 gallons**, according to a report by CEQ.
- Groundwater contamination from fuel oil spills may present a health risk to the roughly **one million** residents who rely on public and private wells as a source of water for drinking, bathing, or cooking.
- Massachusetts, Vermont and Maine have all enacted legislation to reduce the likelihood of fuel oil releases.



Provided by CEQ

CEQ'S RECOMMENDATIONS

- Mandate the same safety features required by Massachusetts and Vermont on heating oil storage systems.
- Require periodic inspection of heating oil tanks and supply lines.
- Develop and maintain a central database of faulty heating oil equipment.
- Allocate more financial resources for low-income residents and expand the eligible measures for other energy financing programs to upgrade unsafe or inefficient heating systems.
- Increase coordination among state agencies and industry to inform the public of how to reduce the risk of calamitous spills.

MORE INFORMATION

To learn more about fuel oil spills, contact:

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Or visit the publications section of the CEQ's website at:
CT.gov/CEQ