

COWLITZ COUNTY

DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING AND PLANNING

RESIDENTIAL LPG TANKS

What tanks are exempt from permits?

Aboveground residential tanks 25 gallons or less are exempt from a permit in Group R-3 occupancies per 2006 International Fire Code.

What is required when I apply for my permit?

- A completed Master Application
- A completed Site Plan that includes the location of the tank, tank size, adjacent structures, roads, driveways, parking areas, property lines and any special hazards. Be sure to include the distances between these elements and the tank itself.

What are the requirements for the location of my tank?

- Aboveground tanks under 125 gallons shall be located no less than 5 feet to underfloor openings and no less than 10 feet to appliances or venting.
- Tanks 125 to 500 gallons are required to be located 10 feet away from any structure, property line, public way, appliance or venting.
- Aboveground LPG tanks shall not be located within six feet horizontally from the vertical plane of overhead electric power lines.
- Weeds, grass, brush and trash shall not be located within 10 feet of LPG tanks.
- When exposed to possible vehicular damage due close proximity (10 feet) to driveways or parking areas LPG tanks are required to be protected. When using posts, they shall meet the following requirements:
 - Posts are required to be steel, to have a minimum 4" diameter, to be filled with concrete, to extend 3 feet above the ground, to extend 3 feet below the ground, to be spaced no more than 4 feet on center and to be located not less than 5 feet from the tank. Post footings are required to be a minimum of 15" in diameter.

What kind of support do I need for my tank?

Tanks must be placed on a firm foundation of concrete or masonry.

Are there different requirements for underground tanks?

- All underground tanks are required to be located 10 feet away from any structure, property line, public way, appliance or venting.
- Two complete sets of plans and a copy of the manufacturer's installation guidelines are required for underground tanks. The plans must include details for the size of tank, drainage, bedding, anchorage and backfill material.
- All underground tanks are required to be cathodically protected.

What are the requirements for gas piping?

- Gas piping is required to be pressure tested **before being connected to any appliance or tank**. The piping shall be tested with a minimum of 10 pounds of air with an approved gauge and the test shall last for no less than 15 minutes.
- Underground piping is required to be buried a minimum 18" below grade and to be backfilled with sand or clean earth. Non-metallic pipe is required to be buried with an approved tracer wire. Underground metallic piping is required to be protected from corrosion by approved coatings or wrapping materials.
- Pipe in trenches shall remain exposed for inspection.
- Risers on underground piping shall be of the approved or listed type.
- Metallic pipe shall be electrically isolated from house piping by a dielectric union.

Are there any other procedures or requirements I should be aware of?

- A separate permit is required for gas appliances and piping.
- Tanks shall not be filled until they have been inspected and approved.
- The permit and approved set of plans shall be available at all inspections.
- Tanks larger than 500 gallons may have additional requirements.