

FARM FUEL STORAGE & HANDLING

Alberta

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Acknowledgements

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1. Why is farm fuel storage and handling such an important issue?

The capacity of diesel and gasoline storage on Alberta farms is at least 250 million litres (55 million gallons). This large volume of stored fuel poses great financial, environmental and public liability risks to farmers. This publication provides information to help farmers store and use gasoline and diesel fuel.

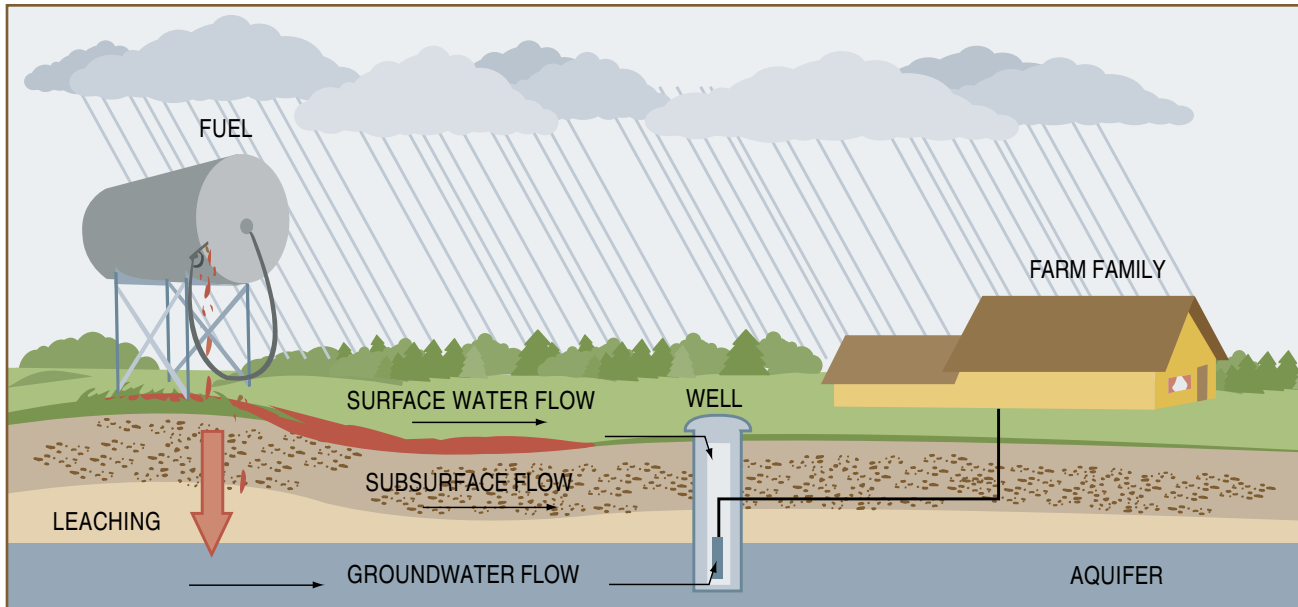


Figure 1: Fuel storage as a possible source of contamination

Traditionally, fuel storage on farms in Alberta consisted of overhead, gravity fed tanks (as shown above in Figure 1). Although these types of systems are still very common on today's farms, there are now other options available to producers in Alberta. The traditional gravity type systems are being replaced with systems that reduce the risk of fire, spills and leaks, and help to avoid contamination, evaporation, deterioration and theft.

Environmental implications

It is the responsibility of all Albertans to ensure the protection, enhancement and wise use of the environment. No person is allowed or permitted to release a substance in an amount, concentration level or at a rate that causes or may cause a significant adverse effect. Poor management of fuel storage tanks can lead to environmental impacts on soil and groundwater and health and safety issues. It only takes a few litres of gasoline to severely pollute a farmstead's drinking water supply. A small leak of one drop per second can release about 900 litres (200 gallons) of gasoline into the groundwater in one year.

Financial implications

Practicing "due diligence" is also a major part of protecting the ability to borrow money or obtain insurance. Banks, lending agencies and insurance companies recognize the risks of farm fuel storage and handling. Potential risks of environmental damage may be enough to prevent loan approval or insurance coverage.