

An Owner's Guide to

Aboveground Petroleum Storage Tanks



(803) 898-2544

www.scdhec.gov/ast

You should know ...

Although the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) does not regulate aboveground storage tank (AST) systems, this publication is provided for AST system owners to minimize any adverse impacts they may have on the environment and prevent potential petroleum releases.

This information, however, does not replace any existing applicable laws or regulations. Guidelines and requirements from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other nationally recognized publications also are available at www.scdhec.gov/ast.

Federal Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasures (SPCC) requirements must be followed as appropriate.

AST Owner Responsibilities

The cleanup of environmental spills or releases from AST systems are the responsibility of the AST system owner and/or property owner where the system is located.

If you have or suspect a release, you should contact DHEC to minimize adverse impacts to the environment.

For questions or additional information about this publication, please call DHEC at **(803) 898-2544** or **(803) 898-0589**.

What causes AST system failures?

Petroleum releases from AST systems are often a result of:

- **Improper installation;**
- **Foundation/structural failure;**
- **Containment wall deterioration;**
- **Corrosion;**
- **Inadequate protection from accidents and collisions with vehicles;**
- **Vandalism;**
- **Spills;**
- **Poor maintenance;**
- **Hazardous weather and flooding;**
- **Improper or emergency venting;**
- **Fire exposure; and**
- **Overfills during delivery of fuel.**



Corrosion due to poor maintenance is a common source of AST failures.



The photograph above shows ASTs with adequate barriers to prevent vehicle collisions.

AST Maintenance Guidelines & Precautions

To avoid these problems, remember these guidelines.

- **Routine maintenance for AST systems is essential** to preventing releases.
- **Precautionary measures should be taken during deliveries** to avoid releases and reduce fire hazards.
- **Periodic inspection of overfill devices should be performed** to ensure proper function and operation.

Immediate attention may be needed if routine maintenance indicates the following:

- **Equipment or fittings are rusted, broken, or contain peeling paint;**
- **Tank supports or walls are failing, bulging, or buckling;**
- **A potential fuel leak is suspected** due to hanging drips, a strong fuel odor at times other than delivery, or a sheen on water around or near the tank(s); or
- **Stained soils, dead vegetation, or dead animals are visible** around or near the tank(s).

In addition to routine testing, periodic inspections are recommended especially during deliveries and dispensing of fuel to ensure releases do not occur.



AST Directory

DHEC 24-Hour Emergency Response Line
for Accidental Spills
1-888-481-0125

DHEC Report It Webpage
[www.scdhec.gov/HomeAndEnvironment/
ReportIt/](http://www.scdhec.gov/HomeAndEnvironment/ReportIt/)

S.C. Department of Health and
Environmental Control (DHEC)
(803) 898-2544 or **(803) 898-0589**

DHEC Website
www.scdhec.gov



Printed on **RECYCLED** Paper

OR-1410 1/17