



MEDIA RELEASE

Protecting Water Quality – Tank Desludging

Tanks should be examined for accumulation of sludge at least every 2-3 years. If sludge is present in the tank it should be removed by siphon or by complete emptying of the tank (desludging).

Do-it-yourself tank cleaning presents a number of risks including working in confined spaces. It is important to be aware of occupational health and safety guidelines.

Small, flat-bottomed tanks can be drained, rinsed with a hose and tilted to drain. One method of cleaning big flat-bottomed tanks is to get inside with a bucket, shovel and broom and dig out the sludge. A second person should be present to ensure the safety of the person inside the tank.

For light inside the tank, use a battery lantern not a flame or electric extension. If chemicals are being used for repairs inside, a respirator may be necessary. If you don't feel confident to clean your tank, you should consider hiring a professional.

A concrete tank could crack if it dries out. Check with the tank supplier to find out if the type you have can safely be emptied without compromising the structure. It might be necessary to put water in the tank to stop it from cracking.

Some plastic tanks may need some water or should be tied down to stop them from blowing over in strong winds when they are emptied.

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