



A 1,000-gallon heating oil tank.

A UST Undertaking

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Old Elm Club

It won't be long before all of us must have our underground storage tanks updated to meet EPA standards. Whether you must replace your tanks or just update your present tanks, the cost will be substantial.

We at Old Elm Club talked about our tanks for two years; and finally in late 1995, the decision was made to remove and replace our present tanks during the spring of 1996. We were very confident that our present tanks were very sound, so the cost would be minimal. With the EPA deadline coming in 1998, we also wanted to get the job done early before that deadline arrived.

To begin with, a contractor had to be found who was certified by the state to remove USTs. We had received many advertise-

ments through the mail which we looked at, plus we also got some recommendations from others who had already removed their tanks. Cost estimates were received from five different contractors, but we also looked at



Redigging hole in cleanup of contamination. Portable water tank in background for excess water.

their reputation, making sure that they all were state certified.

Our selection of EarthWorks, Inc., from Zion, Illinois, was made. The contractor then began the process by filing for the neces-

sary permits from the state fire marshal's office. EarthWorks had to make sure that the tanks were clean per API recommended practices. All piping had to be removed and disposed of properly, the tanks had to be disposed of correctly, a soil test had to be submitted for analysis, and the voids had to be backfilled.

After checking all the paperwork and making sure the USTs had been properly registered, the fire marshal then issued a permit to remove the tanks. After the permit was issued, the contractor then asked for a removal date. This was done so that a state fire marshal would be there to inspect the site while the tanks were coming out of the ground.

May 22, 1996, was the date that the fire marshal's office gave us for removal of our tanks. EarthWorks began digging the holes for removal. The tanks came out of the ground and were found to be sound. We were very pleased; our project was going according to plan.

The fire marshal arrived after the tanks had been removed from the ground. She inspected the tanks and found them to be sound. She then went over the open holes, saw that there was a lot of ground water, and proclaimed, "The site at Old Elm as a major spill." SURPRISE!!

If you remember, the spring of 1996 was very, very wet. Trying to explain to the inspector why there was so much excess water was a waste of time. There wasn't anything that I could say to change her mind. We were a major spill, and it must be properly cleaned up.

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EarthWorks took their soil samples and then closed the holes on a temporary basis. We then needed to notify the Illinois State Fire Marshal's office of the spill and get an incident report number. The fire marshal's office then reported to the state EPA, and the time clock started to run. There were 22 days before the first report had to be filed, but how and where? So many questions. EarthWorks suggested we get a consultant who would file all the reports and oversee the entire cleanup project.

I reported back to our board, and the decision was made to hire a consultant who would then be able to make all the proper reports on time and send

them to the correct offices. A couple of suggestions were made as to the company which should help us; and after talking with Miller Environmental Management from Gurnee, Illinois, they were hired to help solve our problem.



First process of digging hole to pull 1,000-gallon heating oil tank.

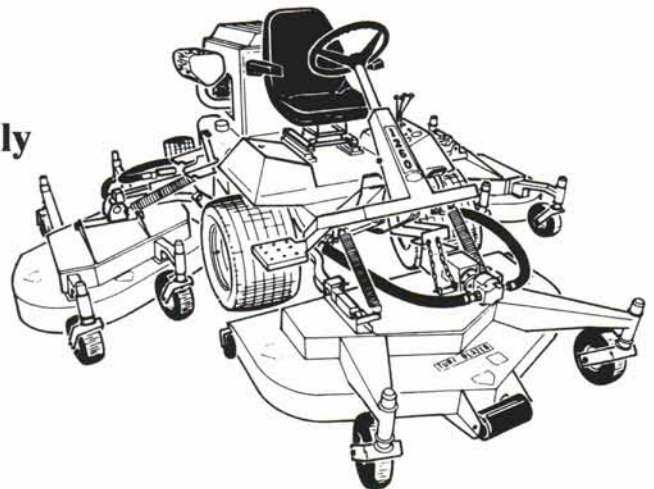
Mike Miller's first job was to get the 22-day report to the EPA. With that report having been

filed, the next job was to analyze the original soil test results. Looking at the report, Miller's thoughts were that the contamination wasn't too bad. The original thought was that the cleanup could cost anywhere from \$30,000 up to who knows, depending upon the severity of the contamination; but with the favorable test results, Miller felt that our costs would remain fairly low. Miller then began the process of hiring a contractor to remove the soil, haul it to a dump site, and backfill the holes. He also had to find a dump site to take our material. With our test results, one was found in the area, so hauling costs could be kept at a minimum. Other equipment was brought in, such as a large portable tank to pump any excess

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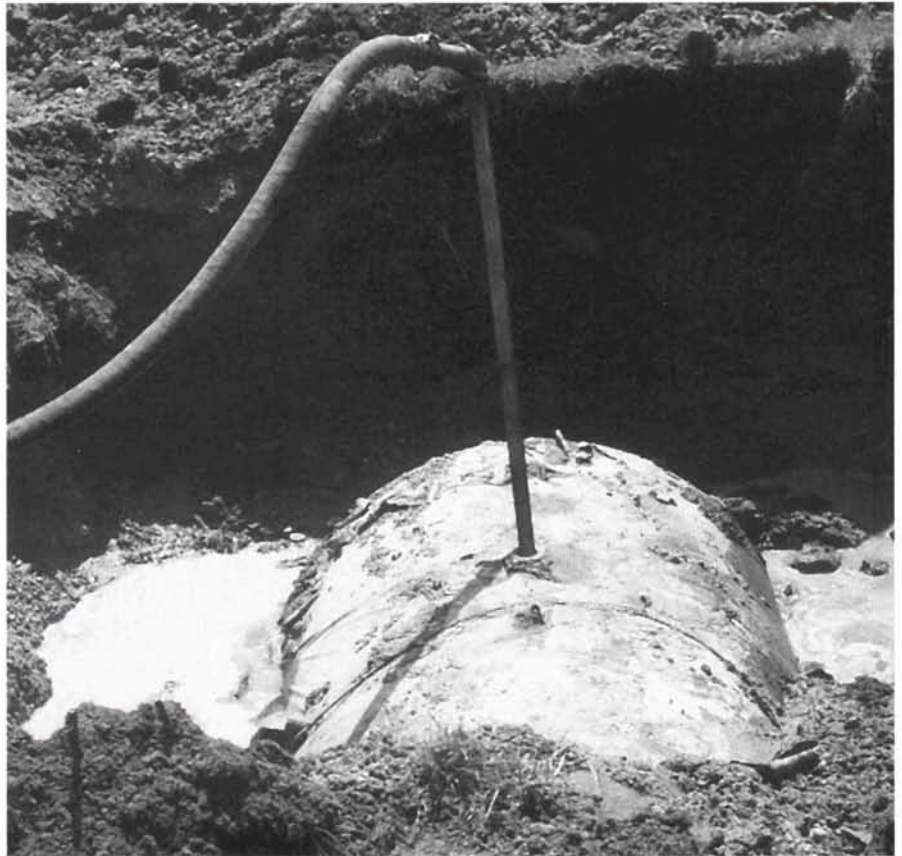
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ground water into so, if necessary, the water could be disposed of properly.

All of the contractors had been hired, the equipment was on site . . . let the digging begin. As we got into the project, we found that the excess ground water was gone, and disposal of water was going to be unnecessary. The amount of soil that needed to be removed also was less than expected, which made all of us very happy; just a one-day job, not any longer. When Miller felt that all of the contamination had been removed, soil samples were taken and sent to a lab for analysis. When the results came back, we found that another one or two truckloads had to be removed before the site would be clean. The holes were filled with large stone and road gravel. Could the end be in sight?

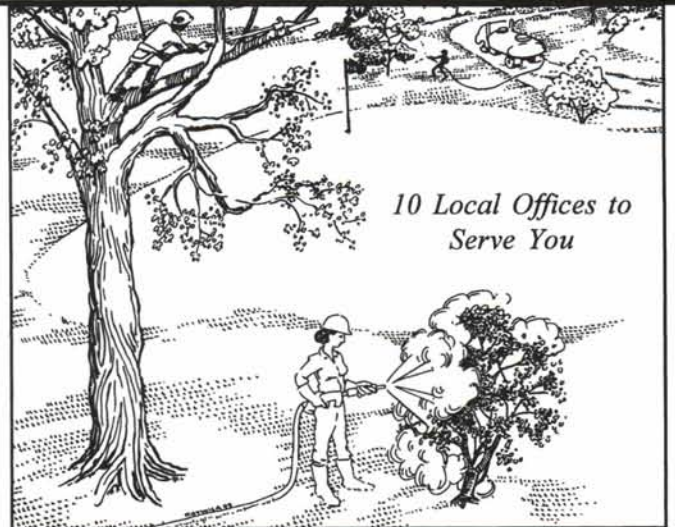
One final step remained, the filing for reimbursement from the state of Illinois. Everyone who finds it necessary to clean up a site such as ours is entitled to ask for reimbursement funds from the state of Illinois. These applications have been filed, and now we must wait and see if anything is received. It could be anywhere from six to eighteen months before Old Elm gets any money back, if they get any at all.

If you have USTs that need attention, I have a couple of suggestions. Hire a good contractor (one who cares about the job they do), expect the worst when the fire marshal comes to inspect, and look at hiring a consultant from the start. It could save you money in the long run. ■



Pumping air into 3,000-gallon gas tank to get rid of fumes.

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