

# No Mulligans Allowed For Underground Storage Tanks

By **BILL KEEGAN**  
*SECOR International Incorporated*

Imagine yourself on your favorite golf course. The air is still and the sun is shining as your foursome approaches the first tee. Everything feels just right for that perfect day on the course. You reach into the bag and pull out your faithful driver to prepare for that always difficult, first drive. After a couple of practice swings, you are ready for the shot. The ball is eyed up with the usual sighting and preparations that precede all your successful drives. A few waggles later, you pull back and release the club, only to find the ball sliced off into the woods ten yards from the tee. You respectfully (or not so respectfully) turn to the others in your group and say "I'll take my Mulligan"; ahh...a second chance without a penalty.

Now, imagine yourself as the head superintendent of that same golf course. Imagine that your golf course has underground storage tanks (UST's) regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). These regulations require you to follow strict guidelines and deadlines when it comes to removal, upgrading and remediation of UST's. If these guidelines and deadlines are not followed "to a tee," costly and often unnecessary expenses may be incurred by you, the tank owner. There are no "Mulligans." Similar to a good golf pro improving your game, a knowledgeable environmental consultant can provide you with the answers necessary to have your UST properly removed or upgraded.

The need to address these issues is becoming a high priority for many golf courses who own and operate UST's. This heightened awareness and concern stems from the EPA deadline of December 22, 1998 to remove or upgrade most UST's to meet current EPA standards. Tanks exempt from these regulations are those under 110 gallons and farm or heating oil tanks less than 1,100 gallons. Thus, most fuel oil tanks at typical golf courses are regulated tanks.

Properly installed, a typical UST may have a ten to twenty year life span. Tanks older than this age range are more likely to be leaking petroleum products to the sub-surface. Therefore, it is especially important to follow the proper removal procedures for these tanks. By using a registered consultant and contractor, costs associated with the investigation and remediation of impacted soil and/or groundwater may be reimbursed at the rate of \$0.90 per \$1.00 by the Petrofund, a user-funded and state operated

environmental trust fund.

With ownership of a UST comes associated potential environmental liability and future costs. Therefore, it is important to be well-informed before you begin removing your UST. If EPA regulations are followed, the maximum possible reimbursement can be obtained. However, violations including missing the December 1998 deadline, can lead to deductions on reimbursement requests of 10-20%, or more. At this rate, out-of-pocket remediation bills can seriously add up. These mistakes can lead to large headaches, unnecessary expenses and less time to enjoy the course. By selecting an environmental consultant and acting now, you can keep your golf course out of the rough and in the green.

## SECOR

*International Incorporated*

Environmental Solutions for  
Industry and the Private Sector

- Golf Courses
- Tank Management
- Remedial Investigations/  
Feasibility Studies
- Risk Assessment/Risk Management
- Environmental Quality Analysis
- Hazardous Waste Management
- Air Quality/Emissions Management
- Real Estate Assessment

4463 White Bear Parkway, Suite 106  
White Bear Lake, Minnesota 55110  
(612) 653-9112 (612) 653-1751 FAX  
Offices Nationwide