

Defensive Perimeter Planting

Thieves will not want to force their way through or over a prickly hedge. The smallest trace of blood or shred of ripped clothing could help police identify the offender. Some effective natural planting includes:

- Berberis
- Stenophylla
- Ilex Aquifolium
- Mahonia Media
- Pyracantha Orange Glow
- Chaenomeles X Superba
- Rosa Fruhlings

A trellis can be decorated with defensive planting.

Securing Your Oil Tank

Following on from the defensive planting tactic, fences and walls can also make life difficult for thieves. A properly sited wooden or metal fence or trellis can give significant protection in obscuring the tank. A metal grill or cage with a lockable access point across the top will greatly improve tank security.

Top Tips in Summary

- Install and secure perimeter gating, restricting access
- Install dusk to dawn security lighting
- Install lockable caps, supported by closed shackled padlocks (check you are insured for any seepages)
- Consider installing a tank alarm/CCTV monitoring
- Join a Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) scheme to keep an eye out for suspicious vehicles/persons
- Make a note of the registration number of any suspicious vehicles and if in doubt report any suspicions/concerns to the police



Closed Circuit Television

The use of CCTV as crime prevention and a crime detection tool has grown massively in recent years. It could play a part in the protection of oil tanks, but before you spend money on equipment, make an assessment of your needs.

Ask Yourself:

- What do I hope to achieve by using CCTV?
- How much am I prepared to spend?
- Is there a reasonable level of light where the cameras will be operating or do I need to think about using cameras with low light capacity? (Most thefts take place at night)
- What am I going to record the captured images on? Digital recording is best.
- How am I going to provide the police with any evidence I may capture?
- Have I considered Data Protection?

Data Protection Guidance on CCTV - <http://www2.eastriding.gov.uk/living/crime-and-community-safety/anti-social-behaviour/#CCTV>

Nothing mentioned above will make it impossible for a thief, but it might just make a difference.

Useful Contacts

Humberside Police 101
Neighbourhood Watch 01482 391013

HEATING & DIESEL OIL THEFT

Don't be a Victim!



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Heating and Diesel Oil Theft

Theft of heating and diesel oil has been a problem for many years and the police have noticed an increase in this type of crime whenever the price of crude oil rises. A rise in the price of fuel at the petrol pump inevitably leads to a rise in the cost of heating oil.

This makes oil a more attractive proposition for the thief and they are now actively targeting fuel tanks at farms, transport depots and domestic properties. The thief may be using the oil for their own central heating or selling it on at a handsome profit.

These tanks can contain many thousands of pounds worth of oil and therefore it makes good sense to take a few precautions to protect them. The purpose of this leaflet is to give the reader a few ideas about what can be done to make life more difficult for the thief.



OFTEC or the 'Oil Firing Technical Association for the Petroleum Industry' offers advice and guidance for those who use and store oil at their premises. There are certain rules and regulations that may apply to you and OFTEC will help clarify these for you.

They can be reached at www.oftec.org or by calling 0845 6585 080. They also produce an "Easy Guide to Domestic Oil Storage" which is a very straightforward and useful document and can be found at

<http://www2.eastriding.gov.uk/living/crime-and-community-safety/preventing-crime/>



Siting Your Oil Tank

The position of the tank can have a significant effect on how hard a target is in the eyes of a thief. If the tank is close to the house with one or more windows capable of giving a view of it, then the thief might consider the chances of being seen too high. If the tank is close to a road, path, drive or alleyway, then it will be a far easier target. Hiding the tank behind the garage, shed or some other type of outbuilding is fairly commonplace, but it does give the thief the advantage.

Not many oil tanks are works of art, so who wants a tank in full view? While it may not be desirable, or legal, to have the tank close to the house some sort of compromise location would be sensible. Of course, this will not only be a major consideration when a new tank is to be installed, but may be necessary if the tank has been targeted before. They do need to be within a reasonable distance of the road otherwise the oil supply company may not be able to refill it for you.

Planning Permission

Planning permission for a new fuel tank will not be required, so long as the following criteria are met:

- Not more than 3,500 litres capacity
- Not forward of the principal elevation fronting a highway
- Maximum overall height of three metres
- Maximum height 2.5 metres within two metres of a boundary
- Not more than half the area of land around the 'original house' would be covered by additions or other buildings
- Within the curtilage of listed buildings any container will require planning permission

For more information, visit:

<http://www2.eastriding.gov.uk/environment/planning-and-building-control/planning-applications/>

Control Switches

Control switches that control the flow of the oil should be turned off and the electricity supply isolated when the tank is not in use.

Padlocks

A thief will usually come equipped with a limited range of tools to attack your tank, so it is worth spending a little more on good quality locks. Close shackle padlocks are the best as they offer most resistance to the most popular burglar tools; the bolt cropper! Due to their design close shackle padlocks have very little of the metal hoop (shackle) exposed and bolt croppers cannot get a grip.

Oil Level Gauges/Alarms

Remote electronic oil level gauges are now available which will set off an audible alarm if the oil level in the tank suddenly drops or falls below a quarter full. These gauges can be located in the kitchen, or perhaps a utility room to warn of any potential problem. Some alarms will emit an audible alarm if the tank rate drops 1.5cm in a minute, which is not common in a domestic tank.

Security Lights

Security lights can have a very positive effect and make any property a much harder target for the thief. It is not always necessary to floodlight the area with high power beams, as a more sustainable level of lighting may be all that is needed. Low energy "dusk 'til dawn" lights positioned close to the tank should, in most cases, provide sufficient light to illuminate any suspicious activity. This type of light can be both effective and inexpensive. High powered lights can be used, but care should be taken not to cause any nuisance to neighbours or road users.