

COUNTY OF SUFFOLK



STEVEN BELLONE
SUFFOLK COUNTY EXECUTIVE

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

JAMES L. TOMARKEN, MD, MPH, MBA, MSW
Commissioner

July 31, 2018

**SUFFOLK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
GENERAL GUIDANCE MEMORANDUM #35
GUIDELINES REGARDING WELL AND SANITARY
SETBACKS TO PROPANE TANKS**

AUTHORITY

The installation of propane storage tanks may have the potential to adversely impact potable drinking water supply wells and the aquifers of Suffolk County, if not properly located. Some of these impacts may include potential contamination of our aquifers, and the introduction of propane into our groundwater. The proximity of these tanks to on-site and neighboring private or public drinking water supply wells is a concern. Therefore, pursuant to a New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) rule interpretation provided to the Suffolk County Department of Health Services (SCDHS) on June 29, 2018 and the Suffolk County Sanitary Code, Article 6, §760-606 A.1-A.4, Article 4, §760-404 A.4, and Article 3, §760-306, SCDHS will review the location of propane storage tanks in an effort to prevent water supply facilities from being impacted by the installation of these structures.

PURPOSE

This document outlines setback guidelines for propane storage tanks in conjunction with applications that are submitted to the SCDHS for the approval of sewage disposal and water supply facilities. Article 4, §760-404 A.4 of the Suffolk County Sanitary Code stipulates that SCDHS may engage in engineering and enforcement activities for the protection and management of groundwater resources. As verified by NYSDOH, the setbacks prescribed in this Guidance Memorandum are consistent with NYSDOH Subpart 5-1, Appendix 5-B standards.

GUIDANCE

Applications that are submitted to the SCDHS shall include site plans that show the location of all propane storage tanks including the associated piping connecting these systems to the building(s) or dwelling. All site plans must include the separation distances between all propane storage tanks and existing or proposed sewage disposal and water supply facilities, storm drainage structures, property boundaries, and utilities.

General Guidance Memorandum #35, Page 1 of 2

Listed below are guidelines to follow when these systems are proposed:

Table of Minimum Separation Distances

<i>Table of minimum horizontal separation distances from:</i>	<i>Below ground Propane Storage Tank:</i>
<i>Sewage disposal system structures, e.g., septic tank, leaching structures</i>	20' for commercial sites 10' for residential sites
<i>Private water supply well</i>	100'
<i>Public water supply well</i>	100'
<i>Storm water recharge structure, e.g. leaching field, drywell, unlined catch basin</i>	20'
<i>On-site utility, sewage and water line, lined catch basin</i>	10'

Due to lot size or site constraints, if the above setbacks from underground propane tanks cannot be maintained, above-ground tanks are typically a viable alternative. A minimum separation distance of 10' between an aboveground propane tank and the water and sanitary facilities shall be maintained to ensure access for maintenance. However, for proposals which do not comply with the minimum setbacks, applicants should provide the maximum attainable separation distance and may apply for a variance from the Department's Board of Review.

EFFECTIVE

This document is for guidance purposes only and should apply to most cases, but it is not a standard and is not meant to substitute for the discretion of the reviewer. Additionally, it should be noted that the information contained in this guideline may be amended in the future as new information concerning propane storage tanks is discovered.

Issued by: *Signature on file*
 Craig Knepper, P.E., Chief
 Office of Wastewater Management