

“PAID ADVERTISEMENT”

Collapsible Tanks

By Nancy Argyle

Modern Fuel Storage That Helps Protect The Environment



With pristine Arctic environments at stake and climate change concerns growing, there's renewed interest and debate over the safety and importance of collapsible fuel tanks compared to traditional fuel storage options such as drums, barges and steel tanks.

While collapsible fuel tanks have been used by the military for years to rapidly deploy fuel in remote sites during times of

conflict, many civilian operators weren't aware of their benefits until recently.

“When managed correctly, collapsible fuel tanks can be more environmentally-friendly than any other method of temporary storage,” says Paul Reichard, a division manager for SEI Industries Ltd., a leading Canadian manufacturer of collapsible fuel tanks and flexible secondary containment systems.

“While these products have been around for 24 years, they've just recently become visible to northern communities and, since collapsible fuel tank technology has changed significantly over time, many people are not aware of the advantages,” he says.

Other fuel storage options harbour the potential to produce a variety of harmful environmental impacts. Barges, frozen in ice, can rupture and spills can occur during fuel transferring. Steel tanks, which require a much larger footprint, are heavy, difficult and expensive to move and, as a result, these tanks are often abandoned. When steel tanks are moved, they have the potential to cause significant damage to the tundra due to their heavy weight.

In the past, drums have been a popular choice, but, given that they contain less than 200 litres of fuel, they are not specifically required to have secondary containment. The regrettable reality is that, despite their small size, the sheer number of drums spilling fuel in the Arctic amounts to a significant environmental threat.

Fuel drums are often abandoned or subjected to damage by heavy equipment (causing spills) or to more frequent moves

which also adds to the spill potential. As well, people often re-use drums which are only designed for single-use. This re-use issue contributes to further spills. Additionally, hundreds of drums are required to achieve the same volume of one collapsible fuel tank.

“Due to their portable nature, the lower costs associated with removing collapsible fuel tanks encourages proper disposal and reduces costs for companies faced with less funding due to the current economy,” says Reichard.

Protecting valuable Arctic environments is a shared mission of both Environment Canada and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC). Over the last year, SEI Industries has worked with regulators like Environment Canada and INAC as well as Inuit land owners to ensure that collapsible

TOP: The arctic mining sites needed fuel storage solutions that could withstand the worst nature could throw at it.

INSET: In total, 76 Arctic King™ tanks were installed at Baffinland Iron Ore Mines – with each tank capable of holding 30,000 US gallons or 113,530 L of fuel. An SEI-designed secondary containment berm with oil/water separator was also used to meet environmental regulations.

For further information on the Arctic King visit www.arctic-king-tank.com

fuel tanks meet the challenges associated with northern operations. Today, SEI Industries is the only company to design a complete fuel system around its Arctic King collapsible fuel tank.

The value in maintaining this preferred method of fuel storage has been recognized by regulators and industry alike. Environment Canada is currently writing a technical guidance document to be used in conjunction with its current fuel storage and handling regulations, specifically for collapsible fuel tanks, that will be released later this summer.

While SEI Industries educates industry and land owners on the proper installation and maintenance of collapsible tanks, INAC is working hard to ensure that operators follow both Environment Canada's regulations and the manufacturer's recommendations.

SEI's Arctic King collapsible fuel tank is manufactured from fabric specifically designed for liquid fuel storage in sub-zero climates. Constructed from a proprietary high-durability fabric unique to SEI Industries, the Arctic King exceeds all US military specifications and has excellent UV and hydrolysis resistance for a longer life expectancy than any other urethane collapsible fabric tank. The tank continually adjusts to any volume of liquid so that air cannot accumulate, reducing condensation to protect fuel quality and extend equipment life and safety.

Today, the military still uses collapsible tanks to sustain training or search and rescue activities in the north as well as help clean-up abandoned fuel drums in the Arctic – remnants from the cold war's DEW line.

In fact, many companies working on DEW line site clean-up operations use collapsible fuel tanks as a temporary fuel storage option while they remove millions of left behind, half-empty, rotting drums from decades gone by.



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Q: WHICH WOULD YOU PREFER IN YOUR BACKYARD?



One Arctic King™ Tank with Frame Supported Insta-Berm™.



500 Fuel Drums with no secondary containment.

SEI Industries Ltd., provides remote site fuel storage and distribution systems. We can provide complete pumping, metering, filtration, primary storage, secondary containment and rain/snow management solutions to meet federal and local fuel storage and handling regulations.

Our products are ideal for mineral exploration, remote construction or military applications; they're rapidly deployable, light-weight and portable. Our products are designed for arctic operations and can save you transportation costs.