



Neighbourhood Watch Community Notice

Non-Emergency contact number 0845 60 70 999 – Emergency 999
Chichester District

Message to Oil Tank owners

With Heating Oil costs being so high, the temptation for a thief is equally high and the result is that they are now targeting domestic fuel tanks in addition to the farms and transport depots.

Many tanks can hold hundreds and even thousands of pounds worth of fuel so where you would take every available opportunity to protect a case of cash in the open, you should take the same precautions when it comes to your tank, especially when many people will see their heating oil bills rise.

Unfortunately there is no fail safe method for protecting your oil tank from thieves but by adhering to some of the tips below you will at least make it extremely hard work for them to get anything and let's face it, the easier the task the more likely they will target you!

1. Fit an Oil Level Gauge to your tank to alert you to an unusual drop in your oil level. This will then allow you to switch on a light or sound your burglar alarm to deter any thieves in action. You can also connect this to an alarm system should you wish. There are current alarms on the market products to deal with this.
2. Install locks on tank filler caps and manual fuel dispensing nozzles
3. Think about where your tank is situated. You may not have a say on where your tank is positioned but possible re-siting to an area where it is more secure or out of site if it is visible from a road side would prevent the opportunists. Also if it is overlooked by a window or close to occupied property, most thieves will not take the risk of wanting to be seen.
4. Consider placing a shed or construct an outbuilding over the oil tank. Ensure all outbuildings that contain tanks are kept locked at all times and remove any empty oil drums / canisters from plain view to avoid drawing attention to an oil tank being on the premises.
5. Consider investing in CCTV technology or security lighting to cover your tank and surrounding areas to illuminate any suspicious behaviour.
6. Deter thieves from entering your property by installing security fencing around your property or having locks on all access gates.
7. A cheaper option is to plant shrubs around your tank as a natural defence. Thieves will not want to risk blood shed which will later identify them and they will also act a decorative disguise.
 - PYRACANTHA Large evergreen shrubs suitable for wall training or hedge. White flowers. May-June followed by red, orange or yellow berries in Autumn. Thorny branches. Grows 2-4" tall.
 - HIPPOPHAE RHAMNOIDES Sea Buckthorn grows in any soil and is wind resistant with silver foliage and excellent thorns. This large shrub provides superb cover. Plant in groups of 3 to obtain berries.

- BERBERIS OTTAWENSIS SUPERBA Use as a hedge or an individual shrub. Deciduous barbed plant with beautiful purple foliage. Yellow flowers in Spring. Reaches 1.5-1.8m tall, allow two plants per metre.
 - BERBERIS STENOPHYLLA Use as a hedge or shrub. Graceful evergreen with long arching prickly branches, masses of yellow flowers in Spring. Grows 1.8-2.5m tall, allow two plants per metre.
 - BERBERIS JULIANA Prickly evergreen shrub with shiny dark leaves. Yellow flowers in Spring. Grows 1.2-1.8m tall.
 - ULEX EUROPAEUS Common Gorse, viciously spiny. Yellow flowers April-May. Grows 1.2-1.8m tall. Plant in full sun.
 - MAHONIA BEALEI WINTER SUN Prickly evergreen shrubs with fragrant yellow flowers in Winter and Spring. Grows 1.2-1.8m tall. Suitable for shade.
 - CRATAEGUS MONOGYNA Common Hawthorn. Forms an impenetrable thorny hedge. Fast growing, wonderful sight in May and June with fragrant white flowers. Red haws in Autumn. Plant in staggered row 4 per metre. Prune to required height.
 - ILEX Holly. Evergreen shrubs for hedging or individual shrub. Green or variegated available. Plant in sun or shade. Females produce berries when males present.
 - CLIMBING & RAMBLING ROSES Useful to give added protection to walls and fences. Wide selection. Heights vary from 2.7m.
 - ROSA RUGOSA RUBRA-CRIMSON Fragrant old fashioned rose - densely prickly for hedges or individual shrubs. Grows up to 2m tall. Red, white or purple flowers followed by hips in Autumn.
 - ROSA BLANC DOUBLE DE COUBERT - WHITE Fragrant Old Fashioned Rose - densely prickly for hedges or individual shrubs up to 2m high.
8. Regularly check your tank for any signs of tampering.
 9. Make note of any unfamiliar vehicles looking suspicious. It has been known that thieves are following Oil Delivery vehicles around different households knowing that they may potentially have a full tank.
 10. Check to see if there have been heating oil thefts in your area by checking the local news. Criminals seem to be targeting certain areas and so if one home has already been hit then it increases the chance that your tank may be next.
 11. You should never attempt to approach criminals on your property because things could get nasty. You should call the police instead. No amount of heating oil is worth risking your life for.

If you need any further advice, please contact your local officer at Sussex Police.

www.sussex.police.uk www.facebook.com/chipolice www.twitter.com/chi_police

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Chichester Police Station
Neighbourhood Policing Team
Public Confidence Improvement
Chichester District

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Telephone: 0845 60 70 999 Ext. 27388 Mobile: 07775 406766

If you see anything suspicious please report it immediately.

It might be the vital piece of information we need! Sussex Police gratefully receive information on all suspicious activity, suspicious persons and Anti-Social Behaviour, occurring in your area. We thank you for your vigilance and together, in partnership, we will effectively reduce and detect crime.

Sussex CRIMESTOPPERS: 0800 555 111

Call anonymously with information about crime