

Farms and Fuel Storage Tanks

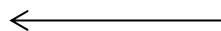
At Woodhams Petroleum, we prioritise protecting people, property, and the environment while delivering service excellence. Occasionally, we encounter situations that must be communicated to our customers, particularly when they pose potential risks.

Recent incidents have emphasized the importance of assessing the serviceability of farm fuel storage tanks and ensuring they meet Australian Standard AS1940-2017. Many on-site storage tanks are over 25 years old, and while they may appear in good condition, prolonged exposure to the elements can cause deterioration. Additionally, older tanks may not comply with current construction standards.

These incidents highlight the severe consequences of tank failure, including fuel loss and tank destruction. Such costly—and sometimes uninsurable—events can be avoided with routine maintenance.



Ruptured Tank



Extent of Spill



When tank failures like these occur, the environmental impact can be severe. Clean up costs are often significant, and damage to creeks, watercourses, and land can result in substantial EPA fines for landowners. In most cases, failures are due to partially blocked tank venting or vents that do not meet the minimum diameter required by AS1940-2017.

At Woodhams Petroleum, we are committed to protecting people, property, and the environment. Occasionally, we encounter situations that must be shared with our customers, especially when they present potential risks.

What to look for:

Inspect the tank vent. If it looks like the one shown below—partially or completely blocked.

The vent shown here, a dual down-draft type, is at least 50% blocked. As fuel is dispensed into the tank, restricted vapour escape causes pressurization. Excessive pressure from inadequate ventilation can lead to tank rupture. The vent should be either removed and cleaned or fully replaced—at a total cost of less than \$20 and just 15 minutes of your time. A small price to pay for preventing major damage.



Another clear warning of potential tank failure is the deterioration of welding where the end plates join the tank body. Cracked paint along the weld seams or buckling of the end plates strongly indicates that the tank is at risk of failing soon.

Therefore, we strongly recommend treating your fuel storage like any other valuable equipment—regular servicing will extend its lifespan and prevent unexpected issues. Practicing “Duty of Care” and “Due Diligence” is essential to avoiding accidents, costly replacements, and potential fines.



As part of our risk management approach, we require all tanks we supply to be in a safe and suitable condition. To protect people, property, and the environment, we will suspend fuel deliveries to any tanks deemed substandard or hazardous until the necessary repairs are completed by the owner.