

THEFT OF HEATING OIL AND DIESEL

Running parallel with rising oil prices has been a significant increase in the incidence of theft of heating oil and diesel from fixed surface tanks

The amount of fuel stolen and the methods employed vary, ranging from the decanting or siphoning into cans or drums, to pumping into bulk tanks mounted in or on criminals' vehicles.

In addition to the monetary loss of fuel, such attacks can also result in serious ground or water course pollution in circumstances where sight tube gauges or supply pipes are smashed or cut and the oil allowed to run free, often long after thieves have left the premises. In these situations, cleanup costs and possible action by the regulatory authorities can far exceed the value of the fuel stolen.

These thefts are not only committed in areas of high crime, but are also commonly perpetrated in less populated rural areas and on farms. Typically, there is no single solution to the problem.

An assessment of the security should be undertaken based on features including the value and quantity of the oil in store, the location of the tank and the presence, if any, of external perimeter security, general security protections for the premises as a whole, known loss experience for the area and the proximity of any nearby rivers or other water courses.

In circumstances where the risk is considered unfavourable, additional security protections/ measures may be required based on one or more of the following:

- ♥ Physical perimeter protection of the tank or the area in general.
- ♥ Security lighting and/or CCTV.
- ♥ Physical security of vent caps, inspection apertures, filling points, dispensing nozzles, etc. A range of products are available from specialist oil tank supply service companies.



- ♥ Physical security of oil supply pipework.
- ♥ Isolation of electric pump controls out of working hours.
- ♥ Removal of empty containers or drums from the area around the tank which could be used by opportunist thieves.
- ♥ Specialist tank alarm systems to detect lifting of the inspection cap or falling oil levels.