

Tanks: SEI collapsible bladders to meet world standard



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DELTA, British Columbia – In July 2014, the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) released the first edition of the CAN/CSA B-837 collapsible fabric storage tanks (bladders) regulation. This new standard represents the world's first standard for collapsible bladder fuel storage tanks or pillow tanks.

For years, regulators, operators and manufacturers in Canada had no credible reference document that detailed the minimum requirements for the use of these storage bladders. This new standard provides industry with a reliable source of information to ensure that the use of collapsible fuel bladder tanks meets the challenges of Canada's harsh arctic conditions which is where they are typically deployed.

Paul Reichard, manager of SEI Industries' Remote Site Environmental division was a participating member and vice-chair of the CSA standards technical committee that prepared the new standard. SEI's participation first began in 2008 when federal environmental regulations in Canada changed – for the worse.

"They accidentally excluded collapsible fabric fuel tanks from the regulations, making it difficult for major clients like the Department of National Defence and mineral exploration companies to use bladder," Reichard said.

Once Environment Canada learned of the mistake, they set out to fix the problem by developing a national standard to recognize bladders as a safe, cost effective and environmentally friendly method of temporary fuel storage in remote sites. The CSA took over the development work with regulators and end users across Canada as well as manufacturers around the world.

"Now that the standard is official, the next step is certification and we're currently working through that process," says Reichard. By 2015, SEI hopes to offer its Arctic King tank as the first bladder certified by an accredited third party.

Already, there is global interest. SEI has been in discussions with regulators and military customers that are looking for a high quality product and one that is recognized by a credible third party.

"Without regulation, the fuel bladder can get a bad rap," says Reichard. "Often, companies with inferior manufacturing capabilities or military surplus tanks, that have passed their shelf life, sell tanks to unsuspecting clients. These bladders can leak or rupture and make all bladders look bad."

For the past decade, SEI has worked hard to educate its clients and regulators that bladders are a far better option than traditional means of fuel storage. Fortunately, the new CAN/CSA B-837 standard for fuel bladders now sets the stage for greater understanding, awareness and credibility.

Visit SEI Industries (SEI-ind.com) to learn the benefits of using collapsible tanks wherever your operation is.