



Spill Response Plans

When transporting or otherwise handling special wastes and other hazardous substances, it is important to be prepared for a spill. The best preparation comes from designing a spill response plan customized to fit your operation, and keeping spill response equipment at all sites and in all vehicles.

Why Write A Plan?

How many times have you gone to the grocery store with a small mental list, and realized afterward that you forgot an item? No matter how much experience you have dealing with spills, and even if you have all the right equipment, it's not hard to forget to do something important. Think of your spill response plan as a checklist of things to do when you have a spill. It will help you to keep track of all the necessary steps, and help to ensure that you don't break the law.

Another reason to write a spill response plan is to help you anticipate situations that you wouldn't otherwise plan for. Every spill is different, and while it's hard to plan for all eventualities, writing your plan in advance will give you the opportunity to think about some of the more unusual circumstances that may occur. Once you have anticipated these circumstances, you can be prepared for them by ensuring you have the proper equipment and training to deal with them. For example, do you know what to do if a spill happens in or near water? Do you know how the behaviour of each of the substances you handle differs? Do you have a solution for a leaky tank?

Finally, a spill response plan may be required for you to obtain various authorizations, such as a special waste permit.

Plan Design

There are several components that should be included in a good spill response plan:

1. Emergency contact information

This should include contact information for:

- a company supervisor and alternate contacts,
- local fire, police, and medical services, and
- the Yukon Spills Report Centre, which accepts collect calls and can be reached 24 hours per day at **(867) 667-7244**
- the emergency number for CANUTEC, a national advisory centre offering advice on dangerous goods emergencies, which also accepts collect calls at **(613) 996-6666**

2. An inventory of spill response equipment

A spill kit should be stored at each site where spills could occur and on each vehicle that may have a spill. Make an inventory in advance, considering the requirements of all possible types of spills, and make sure that the kit contains all the items listed on the inventory. A copy of your spill response plan should also be stored in each spill kit.

3. Steps for immediate spill response

This is a list of the steps to be performed by the first worker on the scene. This list should include such things as assessing hazards, stopping the release of the substance, containing

the spill to prevent it from spreading, cleaning up the spill, and reporting the spill to the Yukon Spills Report Centre and a company supervisor. This section should include general information applying to spills of any substance.

4. Further steps for spill response

The first worker on the scene will not always be able to fully stop, contain, or clean up the spill. List steps for a spill response team to perform, if necessary.

5. Substance-specific responses

Different types of hazardous substances may behave differently in the environment, present different hazards, and require different clean-up actions. This section should list each of the substances that may be spilled (remember to include the vehicle's fuel if appropriate as well as any hazardous cargo), and list the specific actions to be taken for spills of that substance. Define procedures for both land spills and water spills for each substance.

6. Material Safety Data Sheets

It is recommended that you attach an MSDS for each substance being carried. These sheets contain useful information on the hazards of the substances, and can help your employees respond to spills safely. This is, however, not a substitute for the substance-specific responses described above, as an MSDS does not describe the substance's behaviour in the environment.

7. Other information

Don't feel limited to the categories listed above. Include any other information you feel may be useful to have on hand before, during, or after a spill.

Implementation

A plan is not useful if it just sits in a file. To get the most out of your spill response plan, you should:

- train your employees in spill response and ensure that they are familiar with your spill response plan;
- make sure that your spill kits are kept stocked with the items listed in the plan, and make sure that all locations or vehicles where a spill could occur are equipped with a spill kit; and
- keep a copy of the plan in every spill kit so it is available when needed.

Resources

A sample spill response plan is available from the Environmental Programs Branch. The Branch's contact information can be found below. The Branch can also advise you on your legal responsibilities in the event of a spill and provide you with advice on the preparation of your spill response plan. Information on specific substances and spill procedures can also be obtained from CANUTEC at (613) 992-4624 (collect).

Other Topics

Fact Sheets are also available on the following topics:

- Spills Regulations
- Special Waste Regulations
- Environment Act

For more information on the Spills Regulations, please contact:

Environmental Programs Branch
Department of Environment (V-8)
Box 2703
Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6

Phone: (867) 667-5683
Toll Free: 1-800-661-0408 extension 5683
Fax: (867) 393-6205
email: envprot@gov.yk.ca

Copies of Yukon regulations may be viewed online at <http://environmentyukon.gov.yk.ca/monitoringenvironment/> under the "Standards & Approvals" section, or at any Yukon Public Library, territorial agent, territorial representative or regional services office. You may purchase copies at the Inquiry Centre, Yukon Government Administration Building, 2071-2nd Avenue in Whitehorse, or by mail from the Subscriptions Clerk, Yukon Government Queen's Printer, Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon, Y1A 2C6 (phone (867) 667-5783 or toll free 1-800-661-0408 extension 5783).

