

Business Pollution Prevention Fact Sheet



Accidental spills are often a common occurrence within an industrial workplace. If not controlled, spills and leaks can pose a serious threat to the environment and safety of personnel as they often lead to stormwater pollution or hazardous situations.

Spill Clean-Up Procedures

For large scale hazardous spills, contact the NSW Fire Brigade (000) immediately for assistance with clean-up operations. For clean-up of spills, consult the **Safety Data Sheets (SDS)** for the relevant chemical. These data sheets provide relevant information for specific liquid types and are available from suppliers, manufacturers. The SDS gives advice on handling storage and clean-up procedures for liquid chemicals. Your workplace must keep copies of the SDS for each product used on site.

General Procedures

• Stop Spill

Stop the source of the spill immediately (if safe to do so), appropriate to the chemical type (refer to SDS). This will reduce the level of contamination and impact on the environment.

• Contain Spill

Control the flow and contain the spill appropriate to the chemical type (refer to SDS). Prevent the spill from entering the stormwater system by isolating or blocking off drain inlets.

• Clean Up the Spill

Clean up the spill promptly by following the relevant SDS.

Duty to Report

If a spill occurs where pollution causes or threatens “**material harm to the environment**”, then **you must notify the Appropriate Regulatory Authority (ARA)** as soon as you can after you become aware of the incident. It is an offence under the *Protection of the Environment Act 1997* not to report the spill in these circumstances.

“**What’s material harm to the environment?**” – It includes significant pollution spills, which present actual or potential harm to the health and safety of humans or to the environment.

Who do I report spills to?

Spill Situation

Appropriate Regulatory Authority

There is a licence to control water pollution from the activity	EPA 131 555
The activity is listed on the schedule of the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997	EPA 131 555
The activity is carried out by a public authority	EPA 131 555
A large scale hazardous spill	NSW Fire Brigade (000) <i>IMMEDIATELY</i>
All spills except for above situations	Newcastle City Council 02 4974 2000

Spill Clean-Up Plans

Develop a spill clean-up plan, and train staff regarding clean up procedures. The plan may be simple but accurate, indicating the role of staff members in the event of a spill and the location of clean up materials.

Spill Clean-Up Equipment

For successful clean-up operations, store your spill clean-up kit in an accessible location within the workplace. A spill kit might include rags, brooms and mops, booms to contain larger liquid spills, material to stop any spill entering a drain, and material to absorb spills. The location of the clean-up equipment and SDS should also be identified in your spill clean-up plan.

Dry Cleaning - *cleaning up spills without the use of water*

Dry Cleaning is recommended to prevent spill flowing into stormwater inlets. It involves using absorbent material such as absorbent granules, sand, saw dust or flour to mop up spills. There are numerous products available commercially which promote this absorbent cleaning method.

Further Information and advice

Spill Clean-up Procedures

Newcastle Council 4974 2000
Environment Protection Authority (EPA) 131 555

Material Safety Data Sheets (SDS)

WorkCover NSW 131 050