

Types of Environmental Events You Must Report



One of an EHS coordinator's key responsibilities is ensuring that the company informs the government of any environmental incidents, such as spills, that are covered by the reporting requirements. Failing to report an incident can result in hefty fines for your company. So here's a chart of the types of environmental events that the primary environmental law in each jurisdiction requires you to report.

UNDER THE PRIMARY ENVIRONMENTAL LAW IN EACH JURISDICTION, YOU MUST REPORT:		
		RELEVANT LAWS
FED	Actual or likely releases into the environment of a substance specified on the List of Toxic Substances in Schedule 1 in violation of a regulation or an order [Sec. 95(1)].Release includes discharge, spray, inject, inoculate, abandon, deposit, spill, leak, seep, pour, emit, empty, throw, dump, place and exhaust [Sec. 3(1)].	CEPA

<p>AB</p>	<p>Releases of a substance into the environment that may cause, are causing or have caused an adverse effect, when they aren't authorized by an approval or the regulations [Sec. 110(1)]. Release includes to spill, discharge, dispose of, spray, inject, inoculate, abandon, deposit, leak, seep, pour, emit, empty, throw, dump, place and exhaust [Sec. 1(hhh)].</p> <p>Substance means:</p> <p>a) any matter that's capable of becoming:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) dispersed in the environment; or 2) transformed in the environment into matter referred to above; <p>b) any sound, vibration, heat, radiation or other form of energy; and</p> <p>c) any combination of things referred to in the above subclauses [Sec. 1(mmm)].</p> <p>Adverse effect means impairment of or damage to the environment, human health or safety or property [Sec. 1(b)].</p>	<p><u>Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act</u></p>
<p>BC</p>	<p>Unauthorized escapes or spills of a polluting substance or introduction of waste into the environment in an amount equal to or greater than those allowed or authorized [Act, Sec. 79(5)]. Spill means an unauthorized release or discharge into the environment of a substance in an amount equal to or greater than the amount listed in Column 2 of the Schedule opposite that substance in Column 1 [Reg., Sec. 1].</p> <p>Polluting substance means any substance, whether gaseous, liquid or solid that, in the opinion of the minister, is capable of causing pollution if it were to escape into the air; be spilled onto any land or into any body of water; or escape onto any land or into any body of water [Act, Sec. 79(1)].</p> <p>Waste includes: a) air contaminants; b) litter; c) effluent; d) refuse; e) biomedical waste; f) hazardous waste; and g) any other substance prescribed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council or by regulation whether or not the type of waste has any commercial value or is capable of being used for a useful purpose [Act, Sec. 1(1)].</p>	<p><u>Environmental Management Act; Spill Reporting Regulation</u></p>

MB	<p>Releases of a pollutant that may cause, is causing or has caused an adverse effect [Act, Sec. 30.1(3)]. Release includes to spill, discharge, dispose of, spray, inject, inoculate, abandon, deposit, pour, empty, throw, dump, place and exhaust, and to cause or allow to leak, seep or emit [Sec. 1(2)]. Pollutant means any solid, liquid, gas, smoke, waste, odour, heat, sound, vibration, radiation or a combination of any of them that's foreign to or in excess of the natural constituents of the environment and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) affects the natural, physical, chemical or biological quality of the environment; b) is or is likely to be injurious to the health or safety of persons, or injurious or damaging to property or plant or animal life; or c) interferes with or is likely to interfere with the comfort, well being, livelihood or enjoyment of life by a person [Sec. 1(2)]. <p>Adverse effect means impairment of or damage to the environment, including a negative effect on human health or safety [Sec. 1(2)].</p>	<p><u>The Environment Act</u></p>
NB	<p>1) Any contaminant emitted, discharged, deposited, left or thrown in any place such that it may, directly or indirectly, result in water pollution or increased water pollution [Water Reg., Sec. 11(2)]; and 2) Leaks or possible leaks of a petroleum product from a storage tank system [Petroleum Reg., Sec. 44(1)].</p>	<p><u>Water Quality Regulation;</u> <u>Petroleum Storage and Handling Regulation</u></p>

NL	<p>1) Releases of a substance into the environment that have caused, are causing or may cause an adverse effect [Sec. 8(1)]; and 2) Releases of a substance into the environment in excess of authorized amounts, concentrations, levels or rates of release [Sec. 8(2)].</p> <p>Release means to spill, discharge, dispose of, spray, inject, inoculate, abandon, deposit, leak, seep, pour, emit, empty, throw, dump, place, drain, pump or exhaust [Sec. 2(ee)].</p> <p>Substance means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) matter that may become dispersed in the environment; b) matter that's capable of becoming transformed in the environment into matter referred to in subparagraph a; c) heat, radiation or another form of energy; d) an odour or a thing that causes an odour or which may be transformed to produce or cause an odour; e) an organism, whether or not it's living; and f) a combination of things referred to in the above subparagraphs [Sec. 2(jj)]. <p>Adverse effect means an effect that impairs or damages the environment and includes an adverse effect to the health of humans [Sec. 2(b)].</p>	<u>Environmental Protection Act</u>
NT/NU	<p>Unauthorized discharges and reasonably likely discharges of a contaminant into the environment [Sec. 5.1]. Discharge includes, but isn't limited to, any pumping, pouring, throwing, dumping, emitting, burning, spraying, spreading, leaking, spilling or escaping [Sec. 1].</p> <p>Contaminant means any noise, heat, vibration or substance and includes such other substance as the Minister may prescribe that, when discharged into the environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) endangers the health, safety or welfare of persons; b) interferes or is likely to interfere with normal enjoyment of life or property; c) endangers the health of animal life; or d) causes or is likely to cause damage to plant life or to property [Sec. 1]. 	<u>Environmental Protection Act</u>

<p>NS</p>	<p>1) Releases of a substance into the environment that has caused, is causing or may cause an adverse effect [Act, Sec. 69(1)];2) Releases of a substance into the environment in excess of authorized amounts, concentrations, levels or rates or release [Act, Sec. 69(2); and</p> <p>3) Unauthorized releases of a contaminant listed in Column 3 of Schedule A in quantities greater than those listed in Column 4 [Reg., Sec. 6].</p> <p>Release means to spill, discharge, dispose of, spray, inject, inoculate, abandon, deposit, leak, seep, pour, emit, empty, throw, dump, place, drain, pump or exhaust [Act, Sec. 3(ar)].</p> <p>Substance means:</p> <p>a) matter that's capable of becoming dispersed in the environment;</p> <p>b) matter that's capable of becoming transformed in the environment into matter referred to in subclause a;</p> <p>c) sound, vibration, heat, radiation or another form of energy; or</p> <p>d) any combination of things referred to in the above subclauses [Act, Sec. 3(au)].</p> <p>Adverse effect means an effect that impairs or damages the environment, including an adverse effect respecting the health of humans or the reasonable enjoyment of life or property [Act, Sec. 3(c)].</p> <p>Contaminant means a substance that causes or may cause an adverse effect [Reg., Sec. 2(d)].</p>	<p><u>Environment Act;</u> <u>Emergency Spill Regulations</u></p>
------------------	--	--

ON	<p>1) Discharges into the natural environment of any contaminant in an amount, concentration or level in excess of limits set by regulation [Sec. 13(1)]; 2) Discharges of a contaminant into the natural environment that are out of the normal course of events, or that cause or are likely to cause an adverse effect [Sec. 15(1)]; and</p> <p>3) Spills of pollutants [Sec. 92(1)].</p> <p>Discharge, when used as a verb, includes add, deposit, leak or emit and, when used as a noun, includes addition, deposit, emission or leak [Sec. 1(1)].</p> <p>Contaminant means any solid, liquid, gas, odour, heat, sound, vibration, radiation or combination of any of them resulting directly or indirectly from human activities that causes or may cause an adverse effect [Sec. 1(1)].</p> <p>Adverse effect means one or more of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) impairment of the quality of the natural environment for any use that can be made of it; b) injury or damage to property or to plant or animal life; c) harm or material discomfort to any person; d) an adverse effect on the health of any person; e) impairment of the safety of any person; f) rendering any property or plant or animal life unfit for human use; g) loss of enjoyment of normal use of property; and h) interference with the normal conduct of business [Sec. 1(1)]. <p>Spill, when used with reference to a pollutant, means a discharge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) into the natural environment; b) from or out of a structure, vehicle or other container; and c) that's abnormal in quality or quantity in light of all the circumstances of the discharge and when used as a verb has a corresponding meaning [Sec. 91(1)]. <p>Pollutant means a contaminant other than heat, sound, vibration or radiation, and includes any substance from which a pollutant is derived [Sec. 91(1)].</p>	<p><u>Environmental Protection Act</u></p>
----	---	--

<p>PE</p>	<p>Discharges of a contaminant into the environment [Sec. 21(1)]. Discharge includes any drainage, deposit, release, spill, leak or emission [Sec. 1(d)].</p> <p>Contaminant includes any solid, liquid, gas, waste, odour, vibration, radiation, sound, or a combination of them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) which is foreign to or in excess of the natural constituents of the environment into which it's being introduced; b) which will or may adversely affect, either directly or indirectly, the natural, physical, chemical, or biological quality of the environment; c) which is or may be injurious to the health or safety of a person or be damaging to property or to plant or animal life; d) which interferes or is likely to interfere with the comfort, well-being, livelihood or enjoyment of life of a person; or e) which is declared by regulation to be a contaminant [Sec. 1(b)]. 	<p><u>Environmental Protection Act</u></p>
<p>QC</p>	<p>1) Accidental occurrences in the environment of any contaminant [Act, Sec. 31.23(3)]; and 2) Accidental releases of a hazardous material into the environment [Reg., Sec. 9].</p> <p>Contaminant means a solid, liquid or gaseous matter, a microorganism, a sound, a vibration, rays, heat, an odour, a radiation or a combination of any of them likely to alter the quality of the environment in any way [Act, Sec. 1(5)].</p> <p>Hazardous material means a material which, by reason of its properties, is a hazard to health or to the environment and which, within the meaning of a regulation under this Act, is explosive, gaseous, flammable, poisonous, radioactive, corrosive, oxidizing or leachable or is designated as a hazardous material, and any object classed by regulation as a hazardous material [Act, Sec. 1(21)].</p>	<p><u>Environment Quality Act; Regulation respecting hazardous materials</u></p>

<p>SK</p>	<p>1) Discharges of a substance into the environment that may cause, is causing or has caused an adverse effect [Act, Sec. 5(1)]; and 2) Spills of a pollutant [Reg., Sec. 4].</p> <p>Discharge means a discharge into the environment and includes any drainage, deposit, release or emission into the environment [Act, Sec. 2(h)].</p> <p>Substance means any solid, liquid, particulate or gas that's capable of becoming:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> dispersed in or discharged into the environment; or transformed in the environment into matter defined above [Act, Sec. 2(bb)]. <p>Adverse effect means impairment of or damage to the environment, or harm to human health, caused by one or any combination of any chemical, physical or biological alteration [Act, Sec. 2(a)].</p> <p>Spill means a discharge, other than a discharge that's expressly authorized under the Act or any other Act, of a pollutant that is listed in Column I of the Appendix and that's:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> in the form, character or concentration specified for that pollutant in the corresponding row of Column II of the Appendix or, if no form, character or concentration is specified in Column II, in any form, character or concentration; discharged in an amount equal to or exceeding the amount specified for that pollutant in the corresponding row of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> in the case of a discharge occurring onsite, Column III of the Appendix; or in the case of a discharge not occurring onsite, Column IV of the Appendix; discharged within the time period specified for that pollutant in the corresponding row of Column V of the Appendix but <i>doesn't</i> include the intentional, lawful and prudent use of a pollutant for a purpose and in a manner that's generally recognized and accepted as ordinary and normal [Reg., Sec. 2(c)]. 	<p><u>The Environmental Management and Protection Act, 2002; Environmental Spill Control Regulations</u></p>
------------------	---	--

YT	<p>1) Releases of a contaminant in amounts, concentrations or levels in excess of those allowed by regulation or permit [Sec. 113]; and 2) Spills of a substance [Sec. 133].</p> <p>Release means to spread, discharge, spray, inject, inoculate, abandon, deposit, leak, seep, pour, emit, empty, throw, dump, place, exhaust, or any combination of these, whether intentional or accidental [Sec. 2].</p> <p>Contaminant means a solid, liquid, gas, smoke, odor, heat, sound, vibration, pathogen or radiation or any combination thereof that's foreign to the normal constituents of the natural environment, or that exceeds normal quantities or concentrations in the environment, and that results directly or indirectly from human activity that may cause or contribute to causing adverse effect [Sec. 2].</p> <p>Adverse effect means actual or likely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) impairment of the quality of the environment; b) damage to property or loss of enjoyment of the lawful use of property; c) damage to plant or animal life or to any component of the environment necessary to sustain plant or animal life; or d) harm or material discomfort to any person [Sec. 2]. <p>Spill means a release of a substance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) into the natural environment; b) from or out of a structure, vehicle, or other container; and c) that's abnormal in quantity or quality in light of all the circumstances of the release; or d) in excess of an amount specified in the regulations [Sec. 132]. <p>Substance means a hazardous substance, pesticide, contaminant, or special waste [Sec. 132].</p>	<p><u>Environment Act</u></p>
----	--	---