

Hazardous Spills Response & Reporting Policy



Here's a Spill Response and Reporting Policy that you can use to ensure that your employees report and respond to spills appropriately. This policy, which is based on BC spill reporting requirements, was created by combining the best parts of a number of different spill response and reporting policies that the Insider reviewed from organizations across Canada. Be sure to adapt it to your company's situation and the requirements of your jurisdiction.

1. POLICY

Environmental laws require ABC Company and its employees to immediately respond to spills of hazardous substances that cause or have the potential to cause environmental harms and, if necessary, report them to the proper authorities. Failure to comply with these laws may result in significant harm to the environment and ABC Company's employees, as well as stiff governmental penalties, including fines and even jail time.

2. PURPOSE

ABC Company ("Company") has adopted this Spill Response and Reporting Policy to ensure the safety of the environment, employees, and other persons affected by a spill, as well as to describe the procedures that all employees must follow in the event of any unexpected release of any contaminant into the workplace or surrounding environment.

3. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this Policy:

- A **“spill”** that must be responded to includes a 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 into the environment any substance that causes or has the potential to cause pollution, contamination and harm to the environment, including the air, ground, groundwater, waterways and flora or human or animal life or health.
- **“minor spill”** means a spill that: (1) is of a known material and quantity; (2) doesn't pose a significant safety or health hazard to employees or others in the immediate vicinity; (3) doesn't pose a significant threat to the environment and (4) doesn't have the potential to become an emergency within a short time frame.
- **“major spill”** means any spill that's not a minor spill.

4. SPILL RESPONSE PROCEDURES

4.1 Spill Response Coordinator

ABC Company has designated [*insert name of person in charge of handling spills*] to serve as Spill Response Coordinator with responsibility for ensuring that spills are contained, cleaned up and reported properly and for handling media inquiries. [*Insert name of backup*] will perform those responsibilities in the event that the designated Spill Response Coordinator is not available.

4.2 Notification of Spills

Employees with knowledge of a spill must notify the Spill Response Coordinator about all unanticipated spills at ABC Company facility or off-site locations, no matter how small. Employees must also notify all people in the immediate area

about the spill and warn them about any hazards associated with the spilled product.

4.3 Safety Response Actions

After a spill occurs, employees must use appropriate respirators and other required personal protective and emergency equipment, follow proper emergency response and evacuation measures and, to the extent they can do so without jeopardizing their own safety:

- Attend to any persons that may have been contaminated, removing contaminated clothing and applying first aid where appropriate;
- Control sources of ignition if the spill contains flammable or combustible material;
- Activate the fire alarm, if the spill poses an immediate health or safety threat;
- Evacuate the immediate area, closing doors to the affected area on the way out.

5. SPILL CLEAN UP

5.1 SDS

Employees must be familiar with the information on the Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for the hazardous products they normally work with and should understand the hazards associated with each of those products. It is the responsibility of each department supervisor to ensure that sufficient quantities and appropriate types of spill control materials and protective equipment, as prescribed in each relevant SDS, are available and readily accessible to contain and clean up spills.

5.2 Minor Spills

After notifying a supervisor and the Spill Response Coordinator of a spill, an employee may clean up a minor spill, provided that he/she has been trained on proper cleanup

procedures. Typical clean up procedures for minor spills include:

- Wear appropriate protective equipment and avoid breathing harmful vapours;
- Use appropriate spill control material to contain and absorb the spill in conformance with SDS requirements;
- In most instances, loose spill control material should be distributed over the entire spill area, working from the outside and circling to the center to reduce the chance of splashing or spreading of the spill;
- DO NOT ALLOW SPILLED MATERIAL TO ENTER FLOOR OR SINK DRAINS;
- For spills of acids and bases, use a brush or scoop (spark-resistant if the spill involves flammable material) to place materials in an appropriate container;
- Store the container in a secure ventilated area and contact the Spill Response Coordinator for disposal instructions;
- Decontaminate the surface where the spill occurred before allowing normal work activities to resume in the area.

5.3 Major Spills

All spills that are not minor must be cleaned up under the direct supervision of the Spill Response Coordinator.

6. SPILL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

If a contaminant is spilled in a greater quantity than that identified in British Columbia's Spill Reporting Regulations Schedule (a copy of which is attached), the Spill Response Coordinator shall immediately notify the following persons:

- Provincial Emergency Program (800-664-3456 or 800-387-5956);
- ABC Company president;

- Relevant department managers;
- All other persons who may be directly affected by the spill.

7. SPILL REPORT FORM

The Spill Response Coordinator is also responsible for ensuring the completion of a Spill Report Form, a copy of which is attached. In the case of minor spills, the form may be completed by the employee responsible for cleaning up the spill.