Spill Reporting and Cleanup in Washington State

A Guide for Pesticide Secondary Containment

Spills of pesticides and other hazardous substances must be reported if they are a threat to human health or the environment. Spills of such substances to the environment must be cleaned up immediately.

Rule Guidance

The "spills" rule in the state Dangerous Waste Regulations requires the person responsible for the spill to assess the significance of the spill and determine whether human health or the environment is threatened. The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) requires immediate control of the spilled material to protect human health and the environment. Ecology encourages those responsible for the spill and on the site to clean up the spill themselves as long as they are equipped to handle it safely.

Responsibility for Spill Reporting and Cleanup

If the person responsible for a spill is uncertain of its possible significance, notification and request for assistance from Ecology is encouraged. Stop and contain the spill first, then notify the closest Ecology Regional Office.

Spills to the Environment or Spills to Containment Areas

The regulations regarding spills to "the environment" are more stringent compared to rules about spills that occur to a "containment area." The environment, as defined in Washington's Dangerous Waste Regulations is "any air, land, water, or groundwater." Containment refers to a barrier (e.g., concrete pad, asphalt pavement, or plastic lining) capable of preventing the spilled material from reaching the environment during the time it takes for the spill to be cleaned up.

Reporting and Cleanup of Spills Which are Contained

Spills or discharges to "containment" which are cleaned up in a timely manner typically do not need to be reported to Ecology. For example, shop floors or drip pads could be considered barriers ("containment") to the environment if they are compatible with the spilled material and are able to prevent contact with the environment.

Reporting and Cleanup of Spills to the Environment

- ✓ Spills to "waters of the state" as defined in Washington state law are generally considered a threat to human health or the environment due to the immediate impact and migration opportunity of the contaminant. A few drops of marine engine fuel or the spill of a small quantity of table salt to surface waters are examples of what is not considered a threat. However, in general, spills or discharges to water should be reported immediately.

- ✓ In determining urgency in cleanup and notification to Ecology regarding spills to the ground, consider the possibility of stormwater runoff carrying spill contamination to surface water. Stormwater often drains to sensitive surface water like streams or wetlands. For spills directly onto soil, consider the type of soil, depth to groundwater, and the closeness to wells and waterways. For example, if the spill is to sand, or gravel, the rate of migration to groundwater would be much faster than if the soil were clay.

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- ✓ Repeated spills or discharges (e.g., continuous or frequent drips or drops from leaking valves or fittings) can have additive effects on the environment. These releases can build up to a threat. Control recurring spills and discharges using appropriate maintenance and repair. Drip pans might be used as a temporary way to catch small leaks.

- ✓ Consider the closeness of the spill to public areas like schools, parks, or roads. Even if the spill can be contained without exposure to the public, notification may help avoid problems of possible misreporting by someone else less informed. Through prompt spill response, and notification you can help promote the "good-neighbor" ethic of your business.

Prepare For and Control Spills:

- ☑ Have and post a spill control plan with assigned and trained staff. Establish who to notify in the event of a spill. Have specific cleanup instructions, safety requirements and evaluation guidelines.

- ☑ Obtain necessary spill containment materials and personal protective equipment. Practice their use prior to emergencies. The materials should be easy to find and use.

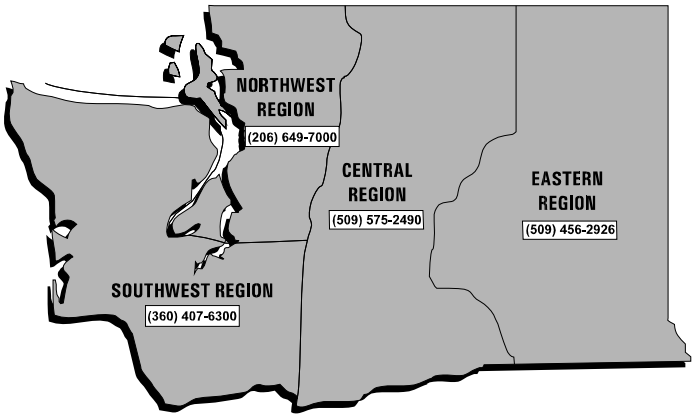
- ☑ In the case of a spill, stop the source and contain the liquid. Use absorbent materials that can be swept or picked up such as kitty litter. Private cleanup firms may be needed for larger spills. Have a list of available services as part of your spill control plan.

- ☑ Small containers should be utilized beneath all connections, pumps and potential small spill or drip areas. All liquid materials that accumulate within these small containers should be contained, temporarily stored, reused or disposed of properly.

- ☑ Dispose of cleanup materials. Absorbent and cleaning products used on a spill cleanup are likely to be hazardous waste. They must be bagged or placed in a drum, labeled, and transported to an authorized disposal site. Fertilizer and some pesticide cleanup debris may be used for its original purpose if the label allows.

Questions or More Information

For further information or assistance, or to report spills in Washington State, contact the nearest Ecology regional office.



State Emergency Management Division
24-Hour Spill Number 1-800-258-5990

If you have special accommodation needs, contact Dave Dubreuil at (360) 407-6721 (Voice) or (360) 407-6006 (TDD).

Central Regional Office (TDD)	(509) 454-7673
Eastern Regional Office (TDD)	(509) 458-2055
Northwest Regional Office (TDD)	(206) 649-4259
Southwest Regional Office (TDD)	(360) 407-6306