



PESTICIDE SPILL GUIDE

— ITHACA —



Occupational & Environmental Health
College of Agriculture & Life Sciences

Spill Type

Incidental Release

- a release of a hazardous substance
- does not pose a significant safety or health hazard to employees in the immediate vicinity
- does not pose a significant safety or health hazard to the employees cleaning it up
- does not have the potential to become an emergency within a short time frame
- limited in quantity
- limited in exposure potential or toxicity
- training under the OSHA Hazard Communication Standard
- example: small spill of pesticide concentrate onto solid surface during pesticide mixing

A Release with Special Circumstances

- a release of a hazardous substance
- release that is toxic, volatile, flammable, reactive, or corrosive
- requires responder to have special training
- should never be cleaned up by someone who doesn't feel comfortable doing so
- example: small to medium size spill of pesticide concentrate onto solid surface, can be cleaned up by a pesticide applicator who has access to the pesticide label
- example: small to medium size spill of acid used in hydroponics, can be cleaned up by person familiar with acid handling and neutralization procedures

Spill Response

When in doubt about the size of a spill, contain and clean it up, call for emergency assistance: CALL 911 ALWAYS PUT SAFETY FIRST!!

Expend effort on avoiding spills in the first place.

- Use care and secondary containment whenever possible.
- Check containers for problems regularly, and fix problems as soon as they are noticed.

Emergency Response Release

- a release of a hazardous substance
- requires emergency response regardless of the circumstances surrounding the release
- example: large spill of pesticide concentrate anywhere where it cannot be contained or cleaned with the spill kit materials on hand
- example: large spill of fertilizer concentrate that makes it to a floor drain
- example: any spill that results in injury to a person

Contacts:

Environmental Compliance Office (ECO)	254-8722 255-5322
Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S)	255-8200
CALS Occupational & Environmental Health (OEH)	255-0485 255-2557
NYSDEC Spill Notification Hotline	800-454-7362

For additional copies or information contact the CALS OEH offices or go to <http://oeh.cals.cornell.edu>

For pesticides: Recover as much product as possible in a reusable form. Store and use as intended. Recover the rest of

- Consult the appropriate MSDS and label (for pesticides).
- Wear the appropriate personal protective equipment: Contain the spill. Prevent spread or escape from the area by using sorbents.
- Clean up the spill. Never hose down an area until the cleanup is completed.

For incidental releases ONLY:

- ALWAYS PUT SAFETY FIRST!
- Identify the spilled material(s).
- Barricade the area and notify others in surrounding areas not to enter the spill area.
- Wait for help to arrive.

If a spill should occur:

- Evacuate personnel from the immediate area of the spill.
- Control the spill. Do not endanger yourself. To the extent possible, shut off the source and block the flow.
- Call 911 if:
 - anyone is injured,
 - the spill is too large for a local clean up,
 - the spill migrates off-site, and/or
 - the spill threatens the health and safety of anyone.

Pad and rolls: flat sorbent sheets of various lengths can be used to line shelves, catch leaks under machinery and clean up spills

Loose sorbents: sorbent media that is not contained in any type of pillow or mesh; typically used on small spills

Sorbent Categories

Universal sorbents: designed to absorb any liquid; they will absorb aggressive liquids such as acids and bases as well as non-aggressive liquids and solvents, such as cleaners, water-based fluids, gasoline and alcohol; made of polypropylene or expanded silicate materials.

Petroleum sorbents ("oil-only sorbents"): designed for absorption of oil and/or petroleum-based liquids; these sorbents are hydrophobic (will not absorb water or water-based liquids); can be used in maintenance applications for hydraulic and engine oil cleanup; made of polypropylene or treated cellulose.

Maintenance sorbents: absorb non-aggressive liquids commonly found in manufacturing and maintenance operations (coolants, lubricants, oils, cutting fluids); will pick up water-based as well as oil-based fluids; made of recycled materials, such as cotton, wool, cellulose or corn cob; can also be made of polypropylene or any combination of the materials listed.

Remember to:

- Report the spill to the facility manager.
- Notify the Environmental Compliance Office (255-5322) as soon as possible or the DEC Spill Hotline if release impacts environment, water (catch basin or drain) and/or ground surface.
- Dispose of the spill and clean-up materials in accordance with all applicable regulations. Consult with Environmental Health and Safety (255-8200).

For all other chemicals:

Small liquid spills can be cleaned up with a commercially available absorbent. Avoid using paper towels; they increase the surface area and the rate of evaporation, increasing the fire hazard. For acid or base spills, use a sorbent that will neutralize the liquids (trisodium phosphate, sodium bicarbonate, or other commercially available products). Use a dustpan and brush to sweep up the absorbed spill. Wash the contaminated area with soap and water.

the product as a waste product by using an adsorbent or sweeping compound. Environmental Health and Safety can dispose of saturated absorbent if all the contaminants can be identified. When all contaminated surface residues using triple-rinse technique, e.g., a spill of liquid on the floor requires that the area be damp mopped three times.

Spill kits should contain:

- Gloves (nitrile, at least; foil barrier laminate better)
- Tyvek® coverall
- Goggles
- Temporary storage container for spill
- Sorbent pads and/or socks
- Loose absorbent (SlikWik®, vermiculite)
- Sweeping compound
- Warning sign or caution tape
- Chalk (for marking spill area on floor)
- Dust pan or small shovel (plastic preferable)
- Small broom
- Permanent marker (for marking spill container after clean-up)

Forms of Sorbents

Booms: cylindrical shape; vary in length and width; used to control and contain spills

Socks or mini booms: cylindrical shape; vary in length and width; used in facility spill response or maintenance; contain spills or leaks (placed around equipment)

Pillows: rectangular in shape; used for medium size spills; can be used for leaks and drips