

GPG 11 Cleaning Up Spills



Governing Legislation and Standards:

Environment Protection Act
Dangerous Goods (Storage & Handling) Regulations



Summary Information:

All spills create waste materials, take valuable production time to clean up and create environmental hazards. Spills can be avoided by keeping containers tightly sealed, regularly inspecting containers for leaks, following proper handling methods and using drip trays and bunding storage areas.

If a spill does occur it must be quickly contained to prevent it reaching stormwater, the sewer or causing other contamination. Containment methods for spills include: sandbags, sawdust, brooms, mops, portable bunding, rags, special absorbent pads, squeegee mops, special absorbent pellets, sand and kitty litter.

Depending on the method of clean up you use, you will need to dispose of the clean up material according to approved methods.

In all cases you should refer to each substances' Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for information about proper clean up. If you do not have the relevant MSDS contact the supplier immediately.



Further Help:

EPA Victoria, telephone 03 9695 2777

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Good Practice Risk Control:

- Ensure all storage areas are properly banded
- Use drip trays to collect fluids leaking from machines or processes.
- Keep protective clothing and spill equipment within easy reach.
- Do not use a hose to wash spills into stormwater drains or the sewer.
- If a spill does occur, follow the MSDS clean up and disposal instructions carefully.
- If a spill does occur, try to minimise the amount of material used to absorb the spill. this will reduce the amount of total waste that needs to be disposed of.
- Always use dry cleaning methods in preference to wet methods.
- Clean up material saturated with oil must be disposed of as Prescribed Waste.
- Check the MSDS of each Hazardous Substance you use and determine what special spill precautions are required.
- Be prepared for a spill by training staff to how to safely respond.
- Keep records of your assessment of staff competency to use and clean up Dangerous Goods or hazardous materials.