

Toolbox talks: pollution prevention

Spill control

What?

- accidental releases of oils and chemicals from construction sites make up a large number of pollution incidents that occur each year
- many spillages can be prevented. It is important that everyone on site knows how to control a spill to minimize its impact and what preventative measures are in place on their project.

Why?

- avoid environmental harm: spills spread very quickly and can cause damage to the environment
- avoid prosecution: fines and clean-up costs can be expensive
- public relations: avoid negative publicity for the company and clients to maintain workload.

Questions

1. What are the spill control procedures on areas of the site?
2. Where is the nearest spill kit located?
3. Where and to who are spills reported to on site?
4. What should be done with contaminated soils?
5. Where is the designated place for concrete washout on site?

What To Do:

- ✓ know where all spill kits are and how to use them
- ✓ practice annual spill response drills to ensure knowledge of plans and how to use clean-up equipment
- ✓ if a spill occurs **stop work immediately**
- ✓ if possible and safe to do so contain the spill in accordance with the spill plan
- ✓ if spillage is flammable, extinguish all possible ignitions
- ✓ contain the spillage – on land use earth/sand to construct a bund around the spill to stop it spreading
- ✓ protect sensitive areas (eg watercourses or surface water drains), and use drain covers or use earth/sand to construct a bund in watercourses consider oil boom downstream of all possible spillages before work starts
- ✓ clean up the spill. Use absorbent granules/pads to mop up
- ✓ spills. Large pools of oil or spills that cannot be absorbed
- ✓ should be removed by gulper
- ✓ ensure to have the correct spill clean-up equipment, eg oil
- ✓ booms, chemical absorbent mats
- ✓ dispose of all contaminated materials (soil/absorbent
- ✓ materials) correctly – those containing substances such as
- ✓ oil, diesel or paint will be hazardous waste
- ✓ ensure any contaminated water is taken to an
- ✓ appropriately licensed disposal site
- ✓ **99** notify a line manager of actions taken.

Don't

- 88** ignore it! STOP WORK and ACT immediately
- 88** hide the incident – ensure it is reported to the line manager and controls implemented
- 88** tackle spills if it is not safe
- 88** hose down spills of concrete or cement into surface water drains.