

Spill Management and Incident Response Questions and Answers

What is the first step that I should take to ensure that I do not pollute environment with any liquids?

A full site survey and risk assessment should be conducted by competent personnel. This will identify areas where you are most vulnerable, taking into account:

- Which liquids you are storing?
- How you are storing them?
- Where you are storing them?
- The type and condition of your site drainage system?
- The proximity of any water courses

Transport routes around your site and all factors which affect the way you handle liquids.

Which personnel should be asked to deal with any incident which may occur?

It is recommended that a trained team should be on site at all times.

This should consist of a number of personnel who know where the emergency spill equipment are kept and have been trained to use them efficiently and quickly.

This training will have included the correct use of personnel protective equipment which will significantly reduce the risk of personnel injury, a vital part of any pollution control training.

Why do I need a spill kit?

A correctly selected spill kit is an essential part of any spillage contingency plan.

It will enable your trained staff to quickly and efficiently contain and recover any spillage which may occur.

What type of spill kit do I need?

This will depend on the liquids being stored and used. If the liquid is hydrocarbon (oil) stored outside then the white oil only product kit is required.

If the liquids being stored and used are aggressive chemicals i.e. battery acid strong alkalies and are water based or soluble in water then the yellow chemical kit is required.

If the liquids being stored and used are non-aggressive and water based or soluble in water then the grey general universal products are required.

What size spill kit do I need?

This will depend on the amount of liquid that is likely to be spilled.

An assessment should be made of the stored liquids, how they are stored, what quantities, their proximity to vulnerable areas (drains etc) and how easily the spill could be controlled.

It does not always follow that if 500 litres are stored then a 500-litre kit is required.

How do I dispose of the adsorbents when they have been used?

When the adsorbents have been used they become whatever they have adsorbed and must be treated accordingly.

They must be disposed of in the correct way as demanded by law: i.e. if they are hydrocarbons these are classed as special waste.

Which adsorbent is most effective for paint and more viscous liquids?

Loose adsorbents/granules are most effective for viscous liquids.

What liquids can be put down drains?

In reality only clean water may enter storm drains.

Many liquids such as milk which are harmless to people can have disastrous effect on aquatic life because they remove the oxygen

Does providing a spill kit satisfy my environmental obligation?

No, not on it's own. A spill kit is only part of the measures you should take to reduce the risk of pollution. You should also have a trained team who can deploy the kit quickly and efficiently.

What are the advantages of wood fibre adsorbants against traditional clay products?

Wood fibre adsorbants will on average adsorb three times as much as an equivalent volume of clay. Wood fibre adsorbants are at least half the weight of clay giving savings on disposal costs. Wood fibre adsorbants are easier to clean up especially when saturated.

What products do I need to remove oil (hydrocarbons) from water (rivers, lakes etc)?

You will need the hydrophobic oil only products which will float on the surface of the water and remove the oil.

