

# REPORT HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE SPILLS

**ALL discharges of hazardous substances that adversely impact, or threaten to adversely impact public health, welfare or the environment must be reported IMMEDIATELY.**

## Hazardous Substance Definition

Chapter 292.01(5), Wis. Stats., defines a hazardous substance as "any substance or combination of substances including any waste of a solid, semisolid, liquid or gaseous form which may cause or significantly contribute to an increase in mortality or an increase in serious irreversible or incapacitating reversible illnesses or which may pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health or the environment because of its quantity, concentration or physical, chemical or infectious characteristics. This term includes, but is not limited to, substances, which are toxic, corrosive, flammable, irritants, strong sensitizers or explosives."

This definition suggests that a hazardous substance can be almost anything, depending on the nature of the release. The question is how much was released and into what environment. The general rule used by many is: If you wonder whether it needs to be reported, then it probably does. Officials will tell you if your specific incident does not meet the criteria of a reportable spill at the time you report it.

## Wisconsin Spill Law

The spill law, Chapter 292.11, Wis. Stats., requires that a person who possesses or controls a hazardous substance or who causes the discharge of a hazardous substance shall make notification to the appropriate authorities immediately of any discharge not exempted by statute.

Under the spill law, in order to determine whether you have a hazardous substance spill that requires immediate notification, you must ask yourself the following three questions: 1) Is the substance spilled a hazardous substance; 2) Has it been released to the environment; and 3) Are there statutory or rule exemptions that apply to this situation?

Remember, reporting a spill never gets you into trouble, only failure to report does.

# HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE SPILLS REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

## **NATIONAL RESPONSE CENTER (federal reporting)**

**1-800-424-8802**

The National Response Center (NRC) does not actually respond to incidents. The NRC is the SOLE national point of contact for reporting Oil, Chemical, Radiological and Biological discharges. One role of the NRC, if appropriate, would be to coordinate air space restrictions imposed as a result of an airborne substance release. The responsible party of any oil or chemical discharge **MUST** report the incident to the NRC immediately. **Notifying the NRC does not meet your state or local notification obligations. Notifying the NRC meets only your federal reporting requirements. State and local notifications are required.**

## **WI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES      1-800-943-0003 (press option 2) (state reporting)**

**ALL** discharges of hazardous substances that adversely impact, threaten to adversely impact public health, welfare, or the environment that do not have statutory exemption **MUST** be reported to the WI DNR **IMMEDIATELY**. Further state reporting requirements may be found at <http://www.dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/tr/spills/index.htm> or by contacting a DNR Spill Coordinator at (608) 267-7659. **Notifying the DNR does not meet your federal or local notification obligations. Notifying the DNR meets only your state reporting requirements. Federal and local notifications are also required.**

## **DANE COUNTY LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE      (608) 266-4330 (local reporting)**

**ALL** discharges of hazardous substances that adversely impact, threaten to adversely impact public health, welfare, or the environment **MUST** be reported to the Dane County Local Planning Committee (LEPC) **IMMEDIATELY**. This may be done by contacting the offices of Dane County Emergency Management at (608) 266-4330 weekdays between 8:00am and 4:00pm. After hours, contact the County 911 Center and ask for the on-duty emergency management person to return your call.

A written follow up report to Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) and the LEPC is required as soon as practical after the release. This report should include: 1) Additional information available since the initial verbal report; 2) Actions taken to respond to or contain the release; 3) Who responded to the release; 4) Known or anticipated acute or chronic health risks; and 5) When appropriate, advice regarding medical attention. **Notifying the LEPC does not meet your federal or state notification obligations. Notifying the LEPC meets only your local reporting requirements. Federal and state notifications are also required.**

# LIFE THREATENING EMERGENCIES: CALL 911

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