

March 2021

Spill Reporting

Report spills immediately

If a spill occurs, or is at imminent risk of occurring, responsible persons (spillers) must ensure that it is immediately reported to the Provincial Emergency Program (PEP)/ Emergency Management British Columbia (EMBC) by calling **1-800-663-3456**.

Section 91.2 of *Environmental Management Act* (EMA) identifies the requirements for spill reporting. The [Spill Reporting Regulation](#) (SRR) prescribes the information that is required, as well as the time and manner in which it is required, when reporting spills.

This Fact Sheet is designed to provide information for responsible persons on their reporting obligations should they be in possession, charge, or control of a substance when it spills or is at imminent risk of spilling.

The SRR identifies three reports that responsible persons must make based on specific criteria: Initial Report; Update to Minister Report; and End-of-Spill Report. Responsible persons may also be required to make a fourth report, a Lessons-Learned Report, if ordered to do so by a director. The purpose of these reports is to ensure that the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (the ministry) has the appropriate information necessary to assess spill impacts and fulfil oversight and regulatory roles and responsibilities.

Responsible Person

A responsible person has possession, charge or control of a substance or thing when a spill of the substance or thing occurs or is at imminent risk of occurring.

Definition of a Spill

A spill is defined by the *Environmental Management Act* as the introduction into the environment, other than as authorized and whether intentional or unintentional, of a substance or thing that has the potential to cause adverse effects to the environment, human health, or infrastructure.

Initial Report

Section 4 of the SRR outlines the information required in the Initial Report. An Initial Report must be made immediately if any of the following occur or is at imminent risk of occurring:

- 1. If the volume spilled, or likely to be spilled, is equal to or greater than the minimum quantity outlined in the SRR, the spill is reportable.** A list of substances and their reportable quantities is available in Appendix 2: Prescribed substances and quantities for immediate spill reporting of this Fact Sheet.
- 2. If the spill enters, or is likely to enter, a body of water, the spill is reportable.** A body of water is defined in the SRR and includes both marine and fresh bodies of water whether or not they usually

contain water or ice, as well as streams, lakes, ponds, rivers, creeks, springs, aquifers, ravines, gulches, wetlands, and glaciers. The requirement to report a spill of a listed substance of any quantity also includes spills that enter a ditch that is not self-contained and connects to a body of water.

The Initial Report must be made immediately to EMBC by calling 1-800-663-3456. Anyone can make the Initial Report; however, the responsible person must ensure the report has been made and all the information outlined in section 4 of the SRR has been reported. (Appendix 1)

Natural Gas
A release of natural gas is reportable if: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The spill is caused by a breakage in a pipeline or fitting operated above 100 pounds per square inch (psi) that results in a sudden release of natural gas; and2. The amount of the spill is, or is likely to be, equal to or greater than 10 kilograms (kg).

Update to Minister Report

Section 5 of the SRR outlines the requirement for the submission of Update to Minister Reports. Responsible persons must provide an Update to Minister Report:

- 1. As soon as possible on request of the minister.**
- 2. At least once every 30 days after the date that the spill began** until such time that an End-of-Spill Report is required.
- 3. At any time that the responsible person has reason to believe that information that was previously reported as part of the Initial Report, as outlined in Appendix 1, was or has become inaccurate or incomplete.**

If the Update to Minister Report is requested by the Minister or if the spill lasts more than 30 days and the Update to Minister Report is required, an email will be sent by the ministry to the responsible person with instructions on how to complete the report form and how it must be submitted.

If the responsible person believes information previously reported as part of the Initial Report was or has become inaccurate or incomplete, the responsible person can contact the Environmental Emergency Program at SpillReports@gov.bc.ca, stating the Dangerous Goods Incident Report number in the subject line, to advise that an Update to Minister Report is required. Instructions on how to complete the report form and how it must be submitted will be sent to the responsible person by email.

End-of-Spill Report

Section 6 of the SRR outlines the requirement for the submission of End-of-Spill Reports. Responsible persons must submit a written report to the ministry within 30 days following the emergency response completion date of a spill, see information box below. An End-of-Spill Report is required when:

- 1. The volume spilled is equal to or greater than the minimum quantity outlined in the SRR.** A list of substances and quantities for immediate spill reporting (is provided in Appendix 2.):
- 2. The spill enters, or is likely to enter, a body of water-** 'body of water' is defined in the SRR.

The accountability to adhere to the requirements set out in the SRR is that of the responsible person. All reports, other than the Initial Report, are to be sent to the Environmental Emergency Program at SpillReports@gov.bc.ca.

Emergency Response Completion Date

The emergency response completion date is defined in section 8 of the SRR as the date that all the following criteria are met:

1. The Incident Command Post is disestablished.
2. The source of the spill is under control and is neither spilling nor at imminent risk of spilling.
3. Emergency actions to stabilize, contain, and remove the spill have been taken.
4. The waste has been removed from the spill site.
5. All evacuation notices have expired or been rescinded.
6. All equipment, personnel, and other resources used in emergency spill response actions have been removed from the spill site, other than resources required for sampling, testing, monitoring, assessing the spill site, or for recovery and restoration of the spill site.

Lessons-Learned Report

Section 7 of the SRR outlines the requirements of a Lessons-Learned Report. Within six months following the emergency response completion date of a spill, the director may order a Lessons-Learned Report from the responsible person. This report must be submitted to the director in the manner and form specified by the director. For additional information on the Lessons-Learned Report, please see the Lessons-Learned Fact Sheet.

B.C. Oil and Gas Commission Equivalency

Responsible persons regulated by the B.C. Oil and Gas Commission (the Commission) under the [Emergency Management Regulation](#) must provide an Initial Report to EMBC, but are exempt from the following requirements in the SRR:

- Section 5 Update to Minister Report;
- Section 6 End-of-Spill Report; and
- Section 7 Lessons-Learned Report.

Fines and Penalties

It is the responsibility of regulated persons, responsible persons and the owners of substances or things to understand and comply with EMA and its associated regulations.

This document is solely for the convenience of the reader and is intended to assist in understanding the legislation and regulations, not replace them. It does not contain and should not be construed as legal advice. Current legislation and regulations should be consulted for complete information.

Failure to be in compliance can result in convictions of fines and imprisonment, as outlined in *EMA* and its associated regulations.

Additional Fact Sheets

Fact sheets on other relevant topics are published by the Environmental Emergency Program (EEP) and available at:

www.gov.bc.ca/spillresponse

The complete list of available Fact Sheets:

- 01 Regulated Person
- 02 Responsible Person
- 03 Spill Reporting
- 04 Lessons-Learned Report
- 05 Cost Recovery
- 06 Requirement to Provide Information
- 07 Spill Contingency Planning
- 08 Testing Spill Contingency Plans
- 09 Recovery Plan

**For more information, contact the
Environmental Emergency Program
at: SpillReports@gov.bc.ca**

Appendix 1: Initial Report content

Report information	Description
1. Contact information of the individual making the report	First and last name, phone number, and email address
2. Contact information of the responsible person	First and last name, phone number, and email address
3. Contact information for the owner of the substance spilled	First and last name, phone number, and email address
4. Location, date, and time of the spill	Provide as much location specific information as possible, including: general directions, description of how to approach the area, latitude and longitude if available, street address, and the date and time in 24-hour clock format
5. Description of the spill site and surrounding area	Provide a description of the receiving environment of the spilled material (for example, the area is wooded and the ground is soft; there are sensitive riparian areas that are at risk of contamination)
6. A description of the source of the spill	The container from which the material spilled (for example, fishing vessel, above- or below-ground storage tank, tanker truck, pipeline, or railcar)
7. Type and quantity of the substance spilled	An estimate of the amount of product spilled and a description of the product type, including product name, UN number, and Safety Data Sheet [SDS] (for example, diesel, UN 1202, 50 liters). If unknown, a description of the spill (for example, sheen or slick approximately 20 meters by 20 meters)
8. Cause and impact of the spill	The circumstances leading to the spill; the immediate cause as well as any contributing factors. May be a combination of the activity and the incident (for example, motor vehicle accident, derailment, equipment failure, fire, human error, intentional/unauthorized release, natural occurrence, or unknown)
9. Details of the actions taken or proposed	Provide any necessary/ helpful details of the actions taken or planned (for example, what steps have been taken to contain the spill, which responders have been deployed, and when they will be on scene)
10. The details of further action contemplated or required	Provide any necessary/ helpful details regarding next steps, including response actions, deployment of additional resources, and monitoring activities
11. The names of agencies on scene	Any persons, government, federal government, local government, or Indigenous agencies
12. The names of other persons or agencies advised concerning the spill	Any persons, government, federal government, local government, or Indigenous agencies

Appendix 2: Prescribed substances and quantities for immediate spill reporting¹

Item	Column 1 Substance Spilled	Column 2 Specified Amount
1	Class 1, Explosives as defined in section 2.9 of the Federal Regulations²	50 kg, or less if the substance poses a danger to public safety
2	Class 2.1, Flammable Gases, other than natural gas, as defined in section 2.14 (a) of the Federal Regulations	10 kg
3	Class 2.2 Non-Flammable and Non-Toxic Gases as defined in section 2.14 (b) of the Federal Regulations	10 kg
4	Class 2.3, Toxic Gases as defined in section 2.14 (c) of the Federal Regulations	5 kg
5	Class 3, Flammable Liquids as defined in section 2.18 of the Federal Regulations	100 L
6	Class 4, Flammable Solids as defined in section 2.20 of the Federal Regulations	25 kg
7	Class 5.1, Oxidizing Substances as defined in section 2.24 (a) of the Federal Regulations	50 kg or 50 L
8	Class 5.2, Organic Peroxides as defined in section 2.24 (b) of the Federal Regulations	1 kg or 1 L
9	Class 6.1, Toxic Substances as defined in section 2.27 (a) of the Federal Regulations	5 kg or 5 L
10	Class 6.2, Infectious Substances as defined in section 2.27 (b) of the Federal Regulations	1 kg or 1 L, or less if the waste poses a danger to public safety or the environment
11	Class 7, Radioactive Materials as defined in section 2.37 of the Federal Regulations	Any quantity that could pose a danger to public safety and an emission level greater than the emission level established in section 20 of the Packaging and Transport of Nuclear Substances Regulations, 2015 (Canada)
12	Class 8, Corrosives as defined in section 2.40 of the Federal Regulations	5 kg or 5 L
13	Class 9, Miscellaneous Products, Substances or Organisms as defined in section 2.43 of the Federal Regulations	25 kg or 25 L

¹ If the spill enters, or is likely to enter, a body of water, it is reportable regardless of the quantity
 'Federal regulations' refer to the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Regulations under the *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act 1992*
 'Hazardous Waste Regulation' refers to B.C. Reg. 63/88

14	Waste containing dioxin as defined in section 1 of the Hazardous Waste Regulation	1 kg or 1 L, or less if the waste poses a danger to public safety or the environment
15	Leachable toxic waste as defined in section 1 of the Hazardous Waste Regulation	25 kg or 25 L
16	Waste containing polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons as defined in section 1 of the Hazardous Waste Regulation	5 kg or 5 L
17	Waste asbestos as defined in section 1 of the Hazardous Waste Regulation	50 kg
18	Waste oil as defined in section 1 of the Hazardous Waste Regulation	100 L
19	Waste that contains a pest control product as defined in section 1 of the Hazardous Waste Regulation	5 kg or 5 L
20	PCB wastes as defined in section 1 of the Hazardous Waste Regulation	25 kg or 25 L
21	Waste containing tetrachloroethylene as defined in section 1 of the Hazardous Waste Regulation	50 kg or 50 L
22	Biomedical waste as defined in section 1 of the Hazardous Waste Regulation	1 kg or 1 L, or less if the waste poses a danger to public safety or the environment
23	A hazardous waste as defined in section 1 of the Hazardous Waste Regulation and not covered under items 1 - 22	25 kg or 25 L
24	A substance, not covered by items 1 to 23, that can cause pollution	200 kg or 200 L
25	Natural gas	10 kg, if there is a breakage in a pipeline or fitting operated above 100 psi that results in a sudden and uncontrolled release of natural gas