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OVERVIEW

LCO-44

PETROLEUM SPILL RESPONSE & CLEANUP

May 2010

www.forestresources.org/MEMBERSAREA/serpub/LCO-44.html

BACKGROUND: Hydraulic hoses break, cylinders leak, and diesel fuel spills. You know you're supposed to clean it up, but do you know how, or what the reporting requirements are? Loggers are responsible for managing spills and must comply with all spill response regulations, including employee training, appropriate notifications, and cleanup.

Spill Response – The following process is recommended in the event of any spill of a petroleum-based product, in order to protect the safety of employees and to protect the environment.

- 1) Assess the risk of the spill to people and the environment. When in doubt, refer to the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for the potential hazards.
- 2) Protect yourself with proper personal protective equipment.
- 3) Stop the release at the source.
- 4) Contain the spill – construct barricades using soil, impermeable mats, or absorbent socks/pads. Prevent movement of the spilled material to drainage ditches or streams.
- 5) Cleanup - Remediate in place if allowed by specific state. This may be done by spreading, scarifying, or through the use of a biologically active remediation product. If the spill or contaminated soil may impact water, move the soil to an area that will not pose a threat to water before remediation. If in-place remediation is not an option, soak-up free liquid with absorbent material, and store contaminated soil and material safely until proper disposal can occur.

Take care of small spills daily, if not immediately, by keeping on site a container that is (or can be) labeled specifically for that purpose. When you are through logging the tract, transport the container to an authorized collection center. In the case of larger spills, contact a professional service, unless you have had previous experience handling such situations. Maintain a current contact list of spill remediation contractors at the job site.

Notification – Any petroleum spill in water, or with the potential to reach water, is considered reportable. Federal law requires reporting any sheen on water in ditches, streams, lakes, etc. to the EPA National Response Center - 800-424-8802. Your initial report, however, should generally be at the state level, as state employees will be your primary contact for assistance and guidance. Many states will perform any necessary federal reporting for you. Ask about this service when you call to report a spill. At the state level, reporting requirements for spills not associated with water vary widely, from “no reporting,” to “report only spills which may impact the environment,” to “report all spills.”

Most states have a set number of gallons as the threshold to trigger reporting. Learn your state's requirement, and how quickly a spill must be reported.

Training – Annually conduct and document simulated “spill drills” at a safety meeting. You should keep your state's emergency response number available at the job site at all times, and all employees should know how handle a spill and contact the proper authority.

NOTE: FRA has partnered with BREG Environmental to provide loggers with easy-to-use, economical spill protection and control products for on-site use: http://www.forestresources.org/slideshow/spill_prevention_form.htm. FRA also offers an educational video/leader's guide/sample spill plan: FRA product 01-A-11, *Hazardous Chemical Spill Prevention and Control for Logging Operations*. Contact FRA to order, or for additional information on these products.

Please follow equipment manufacturers' recommendations for safe operation and maintenance procedures.