

Spill Kit Procedure

1. Assess the risk

From the moment a spill occurs and throughout response, responders should determine the risks that may affect human health, the environment and property. This could be instant because you know the liquid spilled because you were working with it, or it may involve some investigation. The spilled material can be identified from the container label or the Safety Data Sheet (SDS).

Next, identify how much has been spilled and the primary dangers posed to the spill responders and the environment. Once the extent of the spill and the risks are understood, appropriate measures may need to be taken to isolate the spill area (e.g. setting up exclusion zones).

2. Select personal protective equipment (PPE)

The spill responder may already be wearing the necessary PPE because they were working with the spilled liquid, but if not, it is crucial that the appropriate PPE is chosen. Consulting the SDS, Chemical Manufacturers literature or the PPE Manufacturers literature can aid in choosing. If the danger is uncertain and the material is unknown, the worst should be assumed and the highest level of protection used.

3. Confine the spill

Confining the spill may be a simple task for spills of a few litres or it could be more difficult for larger spills, so it is important to make sure that the correct absorbents and size of spill kit are available for the liquids that have been spilled. The kit will absorb oils, coolants, solvents and water. The responders should limit the spill area by blocking, diverting, or confining the spill.

4. Stop the source

This step may happen before the spill is even confined depending on the extent or the size of the spill. This could simply involve turning a container upright, or plugging a leak from a damaged drum or container. Once the leak has been stopped the liquids should be transferred from the damaged container to a new one.

5. Evaluate the incident and implement clean up

Once the spill is confined and the leak has been stopped, it is time to reassess the incident and develop a plan of action for implementing the spill clean-up. First, responders should make sure they have enough spill response supplies to deal with the incident. Enough Pillows and Pads should be used to quickly absorb the spill and should be placed throughout the confined spill area. Additional equipment may also be used such as vacuums, pumps and containers. Once the absorbents are saturated, they may be considered hazardous waste and should be disposed of properly.

6. Decontaminate

The site, personnel, and equipment should be decontaminated by removing or neutralising the hazardous materials that have accumulated during the spill. This may involve removing and disposing of contaminated media, such as soil, that was exposed during the spill incident. PPE may be able to be reused after inspection and clean up. An effective decontamination area should also be created to ensure the health and safety of emergency responders.

7. Complete required reports

If Local & National guidelines require it, as soon as possible after the spill report the spill to the relevant authorities. Failure to do so can result in severe penalties. Typical reports include medical reports, local council or district reports, Environment Agency reports.