



RESPONSE AND CLEANUP **FOR SMALL (RESIDENTIAL) FUEL SPILLS**

SPILLS UNDER A TPDES OR NPDES PERMIT MUST FOLLOW GUIDELINES OF PERMIT

Background:

This fact sheet applies to small (10 gallons or less) spills of petroleum mixtures such as gasoline, diesel fuel, waste oil, or other engine fluids. All petroleum mixtures contain toxic chemicals that, if not recovered, pose a threat to drinking water wells and your health if they seep into the ground water. Petroleum mixtures can kill fish and other wildlife if they reach surface water through a storm sewer, can disable wastewater treatment plants, and can even create severe fire hazards near traffic, in buildings, or in sewers. Thankfully, you can prevent these problems by properly cleaning up and disposing of spilled petroleum mixtures. *This guide will show you how to clean up safely and dispose of the waste responsibly.*

Remember, whoever creates the spill is responsible for cleaning it up quickly.

To work safely and effectively, you'll want to have the following supplies on hand:

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including gloves (rubber, latex, or nitrile), long sleeved clothing and long pants, boots, goggles and respiratory protection (such as a dust mask or respirator) will help keep you safe during cleanup work.

Absorbent Pads can be used to soak up small pools/puddles of fuel. You can find them at auto or marine supply stores, but diapers or other absorbent pads can also be used.

Absorbent Materials such as kitty litter, straw, or sawdust, can be used to soak up small areas of leftover fuel on floors and surfaces.

Plastic Tarps can be used to hold items that must be cleaned or discarded.

Portable Fans can be used to bring fresh air into the home or other enclosed areas and to move contaminated air out. Non-oscillating fans work best and can help speed up the drying process. If you don't have fans, then opening windows and doors will help reduce the fuel vapors and odors. Remember not to stay in an enclosed area with strong fuel odors

Be Sure to Protect Yourself

Put on personal protective equipment *before* beginning the cleanup. Exposure to fuel or fuel vapor

through touching, breathing or swallowing can cause a variety of symptoms (e.g., eye irritation, nausea, stomachache, headache, increased blood pressure, difficulty breathing). Preventing exposure can protect your health. If you or a household member experience health effects, do *not* continue cleaning. Seek medical help if symptoms get worse or persist after you leave the spill area.

Follow the Basic Steps in Responding to a Fuel Spill:

Step 1: Stop the Spill

The leak or spill should be stopped. Turn off nozzles or valves from the leak source if this can be done safely. Use a wooden plug, bolt, band or putty on puncture-type holes.



Step 2: Contain and Recover the Spill

If the spill or leak cannot be stopped, catch the flowing liquid using a pan, pail, hubcap, shovel or whatever is available. Spreading absorbent material, such as kitty litter, sand, ground corncobs, straw, sawdust, wood chips, peat, synthetic absorbent pads, or dirt from the roadside can stop the flow and soak up the fuel on pavement. Remember, absorbents do not make the fuel non-flammable – there is still a fire and explosion risk.

Use absorbent pads to soak up small pools/puddles of fuel and absorbent materials on other surfaces to limit fuel spreading.



Step 3: Collect the Contaminated Absorbent

Brooms can be used to sweep up the used absorbent material and put into buckets, garbage cans / bags or barrels or on top of plastic sheeting or tarp. Remember to control ignition sources (e.g., sparks, high temperatures, open flame). Fresh granular absorbent such as sand can be re-spread on a roadway to keep the area from becoming slippery.

Spread the plastic tarp outdoors where contaminated materials can be safely sorted for cleaning or disposal.

You'll want to remove fuel-contaminated items and place them on tarps. Some oily items can be difficult to clean. Usually, non-porous materials like glass and metal can be cleaned with soap and degreasers. Avoid using cleaning products that are flammable, odorous or hazardous. Porous items made of wood, cardboard or fabric, and sheetrock and insulations



are hard to clean and usually need to be discarded.

Remove materials that cannot be safely cleaned (for example, carpets, sheet-rock, and furniture) and set them aside for proper disposal.

Step 4: Properly Dispose of Waste

- Debris
- Bags of Contaminated Soil or Brush
- Used Absorbent Pads or Materials
- Used Personal Protective Equipment
- Unsalvageable Building Components and Contents



Do not put the items listed above (or any other petroleum-contaminated object) into dumpsters. Placing these items in your household trash or dumpster is a violation of City Code.

Depending on the type and amount of waste, your local permitted landfill should be able to take most of the solid waste generated from a small or minor spill incident. Contact your local landfill, hazardous waste disposal company, or hazardous material control and removal company prior to disposing of the waste.

Be sure to keep the receipt from the landfill or disposal company for your records and to show proof of proper disposal. Keep in mind that the City of Odessa may request a copy of this receipt to confirm that the waste was handled and disposed of properly.

OTHER HELPFUL TIPS

DO NOT Pressure Wash Spills

Do not wash down fuel spills since this can cause several hazards including:

Killing or harming fish or other wildlife if fuel is moved by wash water into ditches or storm sewers and travels to streams or lakes.

Creating hazardous road conditions. Remember, although washing down a spill can quickly remove fuel from a roadway, doing so leaves pavement even more slippery – instead of washing a slippery surface, it's best to spread sand or other absorbent material.

Creating a vapor hazard. Washing down a gasoline spill may move the vapor hazard to a storm or sanitary sewer and could result in an underground explosion.





What Do I Do if a Spill has Already Reached Water in a Ditch or Pond?

Even if a spill has reached water, most of the petroleum mixture can usually be recovered by using an absorbent. You can buy synthetic absorbent pads or booms at automotive and marine supply stores – these materials recover petroleum mixtures very effectively. “Oil only” absorbent pads or booms will absorb oil and repel water, float on top of the water and are easily retrievable. If you don’t have these materials, then try using dry straw, grass, corncobs or other natural material that will float. Remove the contaminated absorbent straw or grass with a rake and thin-spread it so biodegradation can take place. Please see Step 4 for disposing of waste.