



# Environmental Fact Sheet

## Information about EPA's Oil Program

### What is the Oil Program all about?

- Prevention of discharges of oil into waters or natural resources of the United States and, when necessary, response and clean up of oil spills.
- Protection of human health and the environment from effects caused by discharges of oil. EPA enforces the OPA Enforcement Program under its authorities provided in the Clean Water Act (CWA), as amended by the Oil Pollution Act (OPA) in 1990.

### Who administers the Program?

- EPA administers the Oil Program. It cannot be delegated by EPA to state or tribal environmental agencies.
- The Oil Program covers all types of oils - petroleum, non-petroleum, animal and vegetable oils.
- Oil Program regulations apply to those facilities which have a total oil capacity of 1,320 or more gallons of oil in tanks, other containers or equipment of 55 gallons or more and which have the potential to discharge oil into a water or adjoining shoreline of the United States.
- There is a very large universe of regulated facilities because any facility that handles oil in this quantity is regulated, from small farms to large refineries.
- Facilities that have a total oil capacity of less than 1,320 gallons, or underground oil storage subject to and meeting requirements of the Underground Storage Tank regulations, are not subject to these requirements.

## What is the major focus of EPA's Oil Program?

Protecting the waters and environment of the United States and human health from the impacts of oil spills. EPA and Coast Guard On-Scene Coordinators may respond to and clean up oil spills or oversee private party clean up of spills which have entered or threaten any waterway. The Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund pays for the clean up of oil spills when the responsible party is not known or it is urgent to take response action to mitigate the effects of a discharge.

## What are the two major prevention requirements?

**Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) Plans.** These are written plans prepared for every regulated facility which outline what the facility owner/operator will do to prevent oil spills, *i.e.*, provide secondary containment, inspect facility equipment for integrity, assure that containers are secure from accidents or vandals, and train employees regarding what to do in case of a spill or other facility upset. The principal requirement of every SPCC Plan is to provide secondary containment for containers because this is what is most effective in preventing oil from reaching surface waters. Secondary containment is usually the construction of a berm or dike under and around the container area to retain any oil that might spill.

**Facility Response Plans (FRPs).** FRPs are only required for facilities which have the potential to cause substantial harm to the environment, *i.e.*, those that have more than one million gallons of oil storage capacity or transfer forty-two thousand gallons over water. FRPs are written plans, which contain requirements, such as training employees in oil spill response, conducting drills, and coordinating with local and state oil-spill response agencies. The most important requirement is that facilities must be able to respond to a worst-case discharge of oil, either in-house or by having a response team under contract.

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