

EPA REGULATIONS AND OIL/WATER SEPARATORS

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)	Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) Plan
<p>The NPDES program is the basic regulatory mechanism for ensuring that discharges meet the Clean Water Act (CWA) requirements. If a petroleum marketing facility, for example, discharges pollutants, like oil and grease, into bodies of water protected by the CWA, the facility must have a discharge permit. The permit is like a contract. The permit that the EPA or DEC issues will state conditions that are necessary to satisfy water quality standards under the NPDES. The main object of the permit system is to control and gradually end the discharge of harmful pollutants and all toxic materials into the nation's life sustaining water. The Storm Water Regulations Impact many industrial facilities, especially trucking and transportation, petroleum marketing and bulk storage, airports, and municipal and private fleets. EPA has specifically targeted "transportation facilities" with vehicle maintenance facilities involved with vehicle rehabilitation, mechanical repairs, cleaning, fueling, and lubrication.</p>	<p>The SPCC plan mainly impacts non-transportation related industries, particularly large and small bulk terminals. The EPA requires that land based facilities, such as a petroleum marketing facility or vehicle maintenance facility, prepare & implement a SPCC plan.</p> <p>oil product storage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > facilities which have an aboveground storage capacity of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a single container in excess of 660 gallons • an aggregate aboveground container capacity greater than 1320 gal • a total underground storage capacity greater than 42,000 gallons > or a facility at a location which can expect spilled oil to reach navigable waters, must formulate a SPCC plan <p>its primary purpose is to establish a procedure that must be followed by plant personnel in the event of a spill to limit damage to the environment. Whether or not a SPCC Plan is required at a vehicle maintenance facility, it is prudent to reduce oil spills and discharges to the ground and surface waters from aboveground fuel storage tanks and fuel transfer and dispensing area.</p> <p>Treatment and spill control can be accomplished in several ways: with an OWS, and in some cases, with the addition of activated carbon filtration. the method of treatment depends on the concentration and the type of containments in question and the location of discharge.</p>

HISTORY

The **Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972**, as amended by the **Clean Water Act (CWA) of 1977** and the **Water Quality Act of 1987**, give the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) authority to regulate pollutants discharged to the nation's surface and ground waters. With federal laws being applicable to each individual state, the states, in order to receive federal funding, have copied or modified these regulations. Counties, cities, and townships have also initiated local regulations for more control over their respective domain. Whether it's a state EPA, a specific county's Department of Health, a city's Fire Marshall, or a township's Sewer Authority, you'll find that the stakes have been raised considerably with the enforcement of sometimes prohibitive water pollution control laws and regulations.

WHO MUST COMPLY?

In most cases, oil and grease discharge regulations state that "any facility which discharges a harmful quantity of oil, or any petroleum product, and the oil enters a navigable body of water of the United States, by whatever means is liable for significant penalties for cleanup costs and ecological damage". **Any facility includes, but not limited to:**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Petroleum marketing facilities • Manufacturing places • Military Installations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motor Pools • Asphalt Plants • Service Stations, Garages, etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utility companies • Aviation Accounts • Bus, truck, and auto maintenance Facilities |
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WHAT IS A HARMFUL QUANTITY OF OIL?

A harmful quantity is virtually any amount of oil. In fact a harmful quantity of oil, by government definition, is an oil discharge that can "cause a film or sheen upon, or a discoloration of, the surface of the water" or a discharge that can cause a sludge or emulsion to be deposited beneath the surface of the water or upon adjoining shorelines; more specifically, an oily waste having an average oil content greater than 15 parts per million (15 PPM). A navigable body of water includes just about any creek, stream, lake, river, estuary, bay ocean or adjoining body of water of the United States. The means of discharge may include discharge through a pipe, culvert, ditch, or storm sewer.