

# Spill Reporting Guide



## Contents

|                                             |          |
|---------------------------------------------|----------|
| <b>How and When to Report a Spill .....</b> | <b>3</b> |
| <b>What To Do When a Spill Happens.....</b> | <b>3</b> |
| <b>Provincial Spill Reporting.....</b>      | <b>4</b> |
| <b>Next Steps After a Spill .....</b>       | <b>4</b> |
| <b>Why Reporting Spills Matters .....</b>   | <b>4</b> |

## How and When to Report a Spill

Report all spills to Victoria Public Works at 250.361.0400 (24/7). Report spills to the City of Victoria even if you've already contacted the Province and Capital Regional District.

All spills or leaks — any size, substance or location — must be reported. Even if you think something may not be hazardous, it may still impact public health, downstream infrastructure and the environment.

A spill is any accidental release, leak or illegal dumping of substances —on land, in water or into the air — that may harm the environment or public health.

Spills may involve materials such as fuels (e.g., gasoline, home heating oil, motor oil), paint, antifreeze, chemicals, sewage, large volumes of sediment, unusual liquids or any other substance that can cause pollution.

## What To Do When a Spill Happens

These are general guidelines. The City of Victoria is not responsible for actions taken by individuals during a spill response. Always prioritize personal safety and contact appropriate authorities for guidance.

- Keep everyone safe. If the spill is toxic, flammable or you're not sure, leave the area and call 911. All large spills are likely to present a hazard.
- Report the spill to the City of Victoria at 250.361.0400 (24/7) and other required authorities (see Provincial Spill Reporting below).
- Ensure the area is safe:
  - Do not approach if there is any risk to health or safety.
  - Do not approach if you are unsure of the spill materials.
  - Check for hazards (flammable material, noxious fumes, cause of spill).
  - Turn off engines and nearby electrical equipment.
- If area is deemed safe and you have the appropriate containment kits for spill materials:
  - Stop the spill at the source (e.g., upright container, shut off valve).
  - Block drains and waterways using appropriate absorbents or barriers.
  - Contain the spill to limit spreading.
  - **Do not flush spill into a municipal drain or other receptors.**
  - Clean up using appropriate materials.
  - Appropriately store and dispose of cleanup material as hazardous waste.

- When appropriate, notify coworkers/the person in charge to share risks, updates and reporting needs.
- Follow through with any further reporting requirements from authorities.

## Provincial Spill Reporting

Spills must be reported to the B.C. Environmental Emergency Branch at 1.800.663.3456 (24/7).

Visit the Province's [spill reporting web page](#) for more information about what is required, including what information you must provide to the dispatcher.

Spills are regulated under the [B.C. Spill Reporting Regulation](#).

## Next Steps After a Spill

After a spill is reported, the City of Victoria, Capital Regional District and/or Province will:

- Assess the spill and determine next steps
- Contact you for more details
- Dispatch crews or inspectors
- Provide cleanup guidance and reporting expectations
- Follow up to ensure compliance

## Why Reporting Spills Matters

Spills on land can contaminate soil, harm vegetation and wildlife, pose health risks to people and damage infrastructure — especially if they seep into groundwater, enter the storm or sanitary sewer system or release harmful vapours into the air.

Common spill sources include construction sites, parking lots, rooftops or anywhere certain materials are being used or stored. Material typically enters the stormwater system through catch basins, roof drains, perimeter drains and curb inlets. Spills can quickly reach local streams, harbours and shorelines, posing serious risks to water quality, marine life and ecosystems.

Spills that enter the sanitary sewer system, such as through floor drains or plumbing, can disrupt wastewater treatment processes.