



# Columbia Fire Department

Standard Operating Guideline OPS-035

## Response to Fuel and Oil Spills

**Effective:** January 11, 2010

**Issued by** Wm. Bradley Anderson, Fire Chief

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**Rescinds:** No Previous

**Purpose:** To establish a guideline for responding to fuel and oil spills.

**Scope:** This guideline applies to all suppression personnel.

**Guideline:** Petroleum based products such as gasoline, diesel, and motor oil pose not only a fire danger, but an environmental issue. This guideline will be used to assist responding person on how to handle incidents involving these products.

### I. Safety

- A. Because these products can be highly flammable personnel should wear full firefighting PPE with SCBA until the products flammability can be determined.
- B. These products can pose a severe threat to the environment, so all efforts should be made to prevent or minimize their contact with the ground, and especially water ways.

### II. Definitions

- A. DHEC – The Department of Health and Environmental Control
- B. NRC – The National Response Center is the sole federal point of contact for reporting oil and chemical spills. (800) 424-8802
- C. Hardtop – A surface that minimizes the adsorption of the fuel or oil spill such as; pavement and cement.
- D. Responsible Party – The person or business that is liable for the incident and all costs associated with it.
- E. Notification – This is for information purposes only, it is unlikely that DHEC will respond to the site. A visit may be made to the location during normal business hours as a follow-up.

### III. Minor Spills

- A. Minor spills of petroleum based fuels and motor oils pose a lesser threat to property and the environment than major spills. However, it is still important to take protective measures in response to these incidents. The following type incidents are to be considered minor, unless additional information warrants them being upgraded.

1. Spills less than 25 gallons on the hardtop.
  2. Spills less than five gallons on soil.
- B. The following actions should be taken as a minimum on this type incident:
1. Prevent the spread of product by using damming, diking and diverting techniques.
  2. Eliminate any possible ignition sources.
  3. Isolate the area to a safe distance until the spill is controlled.
  4. Have Columbia Central to notify DHEC of the spill. Advise Central that no response is necessary that this is a **notification only**. Provide the following information.
    - a. Type of product spilled, i.e. motor oil, diesel.
    - b. Approximate amount of spill
    - c. Type of surface spill is on
    - d. It is not threatening a water source.
  5. If vapors are suspected, as in gasoline Haz-Mat 1 may need to be requested.

#### IV. Major Spills

- A. Major spills of petroleum based fuels and motor oils can pose a significant threat to property and the environment. These incidents can quickly escalate and cause damage to property and the environment. Ensure all protective measures are taken to minimize the spill. The following types of incidents are to be considered major incidents.
1. Spills greater than 25 gallons on the hardtop.
  2. Spills greater than five gallons on soil.
  3. Spills of any size threatening a waterway.
  4. Spills of any size in a waterway.
  5. Spills with impending bad weather that could cause an issue.
- B. The following actions should be taken as a minimum on this type of incident.
1. Ensure that Haz-Mat 1 is responding to the incident.
  2. Prevent the spread of product by using damming, diking and diverting techniques.
  3. Eliminate any possible ignition sources. If there is a potential for ignition a foam blanket should be applied.
  4. Isolate the area to a safe distance until the spill is controlled.
  5. Have Columbia Central to notify DHEC of the spill. Advise Central that a **response** from DHEC is necessary. Provide the following information.

- a. Type of product spilled
- b. Approximate amount of spill
- c. Type of surface spill is on
- d. Weather a water source is affected.
- e. A call back number for DHEC to call (preferably Haz-Mat 1 or the responding Battalion Chief's phone).
- f. Status of the spill; is it contained or continuing to spread.

#### **V. Responsible Party**

- A. By law it is this person that is responsible for the spill to contact DHEC. This function is initiated by the Columbia Fire Department in order to expedite the process. Once contact is made and DHEC is informed of the incident all information will be turned over to DHEC for coordination with the responsible party.
- B. The responsible party will be liable for the approved clean-up of the scene.
- C. For larger spills, and those involving water the NRC will also need to be contacted.