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Oil Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure (SPCC) Program: Information for Farmers

This fact sheet will assist you, as a farmer, in understanding your obligations under the SPCC Program.

What is SPCC?

The goal of the SPCC program is to prevent oil spills into waters of the United States and adjoining shorelines. Oil spills can cause injuries to people and damage to the environment. A key element of this program calls for farmers and other facilities to have an oil spill prevention plan, called an ***SPCC Plan***. These Plans can help farmers prevent oil spills which can damage water resources needed for farming operations.

What is considered a farm under SPCC?

Under SPCC, a farm is: "a facility on a tract of land devoted to the production of crops or raising of animals, including fish, which produced and sold, or normally would have produced and sold, $1,000 or more of agricultural products during a year."

Is my farm covered by SPCC?

SPCC applies to a farm which:

- Stores, transfers, uses, or consumes **oil** or **oil products**, such as diesel fuel, gasoline, lube oil, hydraulic oil, adjuvant oil, crop oil, vegetable oil, or animal fat; and
- Stores more than **1,320 US gallons** in aboveground containers or more than **42,000 US gallons** in completely buried containers; and
- Could **reasonably be expected to discharge oil to waters** of the US or adjoining shorelines, such as interstate waters, intrastate lakes, rivers, and streams.

If your farm meets all of these criteria, then your farm is covered by SPCC.

TIPS:
** Count only containers of oil that have a storage capacity of 55 US gallons and above.*

** Adjacent or non-adjacent parcels, either leased or owned, may be considered separate facilities for SPCC purposes. Containers on separate parcels (that the farmer identifies as separate facilities based on how they are operated) do not need to be added together in determining whether the 1,320-gallon applicability threshold is met.*

If my farm is covered by SPCC, what should I do?

The SPCC program requires you to prepare and implement an SPCC Plan. If you **already have a Plan,** maintain it. **If you do not have a Plan,** you should prepare and implement one. Many farmers will need to have their Plan certified by a Professional Engineer ("PE"). However, you may be eligible to self-certify your amended Plan if:

- Your farm has a total oil storage capacity between 1,320 and 10,000 gallons in aboveground containers, and the farm has a good spill history (as described in the SPCC rule), you may prepare and self-certify your own Plan. (However, if you decide to use certain alternate measures allowed by the federal SPCC Rule, you will need a PE.)
- Your farm has storage capacity of more than 10,000 gallons, or has had an oil spill you may need to prepare an SPCC Plan **certified by a PE.**

TIP: *If you are eligible to self certify your Plan, and no aboveground container at your farm is greater than 5,000 gallons in capacity, then you may use the Plan template that is available to download from EPA's Web site at:* http://www.epa.gov/oem/content/spcc/tier1temp.htm

When should I prepare and implement a Plan?

Farms in operation on or before August 16, 2002, must maintain or amend their existing Plan by ***November 10, 2011***. Any farm that started operation after August 16, 2002, but before November 10, 2011, must prepare and use a Plan on or before ***November 10, 2011***.

Note: If your farm was in operation before August 16, 2002, and you do not already have a Plan, you must prepare a Plan now. ***Do not*** *wait until November 10, 2011.*

What information will I need to prepare an SPCC Plan for my farm?

- A list of the oil containers at the farm by parcel (including the contents and location of each container);
- A brief description of the procedures that you will use to prevent oil spills. For example, steps you use to transfer fuel from a storage tank to your farm vehicles that reduce the possibility of a fuel spill;
- A brief description of the measures you installed to prevent oil from reaching water (see next section);
- A brief description of the measures you will use to contain and cleanup an oil spill to water; and
- A list of emergency contacts and first responders.

What spill prevention measures should I implement and include in my SPCC Plan?

- **Use** containers suitable for the oil stored. For example, use a container designed for flammable liquids to store gasoline;
- **Identify** contractors or other local personnel who can help you clean up an oil spill;
- **Provide overfill prevention** for your oil storage containers. You could use a high-level alarm, or audible vent, or establish a procedure to fill containers;
- **Provide effective, sized secondary containment** for bulk storage containers, such as a dike or a remote impoundment. The containment must be able to hold the full capacity of the container plus possible rainfall. The dike may be constructed of earth or concrete. A double-walled tank may also suffice;
- **Provide effective, general secondary containment** to address the most likely discharge where you transfer oil to and from containers and for mobile refuelers, such as fuel nurse tanks mounted on trucks or trailers. For example, you may use sorbent materials, drip pans or curbing for these areas; and
- **Periodically inspect and test pipes and containers.** You should visually inspect aboveground pipes and inspect aboveground containers following industry standards. You must "leak test" buried pipes when they are installed or repaired. EPA recommends you keep a written record of your inspections.

How and when do I maintain my SPCC Plan?

Amend and update your SPCC Plan when changes are made to the farm, for example, if you add new storage containers (e.g. tanks) that are 55 gallons or larger, or if you purchase or lease parcels with containers that are 55 gallons or larger. You must review your Plan every five years to make sure it includes any changes in oil storage at your farm.

What should I do if I have an oil spill?

- Activate your SPCC Plan procedures to prevent the oil spill from reaching a creek or river.
- Implement spill cleanup and mitigation procedures outlined in your Plan.
- **Notify the National Response Center (NRC)** at **800-424-8802** if you have an oil discharge to waters or adjoining shorelines.
- If the amount of oil spilled to water is more that 42 gallons on two different occasions within a 12-month period or more than 1,000 gallons to water in a single spill event, then notify your EPA Regional office in writing.

For More Information

Read the SPCC rule and additional resources:
http://www.epa.gov/emergencies/spcc

Call or send an e-mail to the EPA Ag Compliance Assistance Center: 1-888-663-2155
http://www.epa.gov/agriculture/agctr.html

Call the Superfund, TRI, EPCRA, RMP, and Oil Information Center:
(800) 424-9346 or (703) 412-9810
TDD (800) 553-7672 or (703) 412-3323
http://www.epa.gov/superfund/resources/infocenter