

Guidance for

Sudden Agricultural Chemical Incident Cleanup

Guidance Document 2

When a person discovers a leak, an overfill, a spill, or other signs of an agricultural chemical incident, the following steps should be taken to clean up the release to comply with state laws regarding agricultural chemical incident cleanups and to ensure eligibility for ACRRA reimbursement of cleanup costs.

REPORT THE INCIDENT IMMEDIATELY

(see "Exception " on reporting)

Under state law, anyone who has control of, custody of, or responsibility for an agricultural chemical is considered to be a responsible party and must notify the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) immediately when an incident involving that agricultural chemical occurs. Notify the MDA of an incident as soon as possible by calling the 24-hour duty officer at (651) 649-5451 (metro) or 1-800-422-0798 (non-metro). The MDA staff person on call will promptly call you back to explain what steps to take to minimize the impact of the release. Generally, these will include the following actions:

1. Secure Site

- Secure a perimeter and keep all non-essential people out of the incident area;
- Do not allow smoking in area;
- Alert firefighters and/or other emergency personnel of precautions as advised by material safety data sheets;
- Arrange off-site evacuation if necessary (this should be done through working with the local officials); and,
- If the leak or spill is indoors, ventilate the area as thoroughly as possible.

2. Abatement

- If it can be done safely, stop further leakage from damaged containers;
- Contain above-ground runoff by placing absorbent pillows, clay, other heavy soil, etc., around liquid spills to limit further spread of spilled ag chemical; and,
- Plug or berm underground waterways (storm sewers, sanitary sewers, etc.).

3. Recovery

- Transfer the remaining contents of each leaking container into a clean empty container of the same type and remove the salvaged container from the contaminated area;
- Separate any containers that have not been affected by the spill; and,
- Arrange to remove, hold, or dispose of pooled contaminated water, soil, etc.

4. Remediation*

- Determine the extent and degree of contamination;
- Develop steps for the final clean-up of the incident;

- Reuse or dispose of the recovered chemicals and/or contaminated materials; and,
- Determine the effectiveness of the clean-up through the collection & analysis of samples.
- Each step of the proposal must receive MDA approval before being implemented.

Also, notify MDA of suspected incidents including the discovery of product-contaminated soils, contaminated wells or surface water, product inventory loss and failed tank or pipeline tests.

APPLY FOR REIMBURSEMENT

Upon completion of steps 1-4, a responsible person who has investigated and taken corrective actions in response to an agricultural chemical incident may apply to the ACRRA Board (which administers the Agricultural Chemical Response and Reimbursement Account) for reimbursement of cleanup costs: For more information on the ACRRA reimbursement program call (651) 201-6490.

"Exception " for Reporting

Reporting is necessary no matter how small the quantity involved, except for incidents which meet ALL of the following criteria:

1. The responsible party or owner of real property is a licensed or certified private or commercial pesticide applicator;
2. The amount of pesticide involved in the release and any other releases which have occurred at the site is less than what can be legally applied to one acre of agricultural cropland during the preceding year; and,
3. The release was not into or near public water or ground water.

No matter how small the quantity involved the responsible party must immediately take all reasonable actions necessary to minimize and abate the incident.