



ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
DIVISION OF SPILL PREVENTION AND RESPONSE
PREVENTION, PREPAREDNESS, AND RESPONSE PROGRAM
GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

Guidance No. PPRP 2022-01.1

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October 25, 2022

Implementation of *Spill Reporter*, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation Online Spill Reporting Portal

Purpose:

The purpose of this guidance is to clarify how the Spill Prevention and Response Division's Prevention, Preparedness, and Response Program (PPRP) will implement *Spill Reporter*, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation's (ADEC's or department's) new online spill reporting portal and enforce the requirements in 18 AAC 75.300(a) for telephone notification of certain discharges or releases of oil or other hazardous substances.

Applicability:

This guidance applies to all persons in charge of a facility or operation at which a discharge or release of oil or other hazardous substances occur. It applies to PPRP staff responsible for receiving, processing, and responding to notifications of oil or other hazardous substance discharges or releases.

Background:

Under 18 AAC 75.300(a), persons in charge of a facility or operation at which a discharge or release of oil or other hazardous substances occurs are required to notify the department of the spill by telephone within specific timeframes based on volume and receiving environment.

On October 14, 2022, the Prevention, Preparedness, and Response Program activated *Spill Reporter*, a new online spill reporting portal. We encourage spillers to use *Spill Reporter* in lieu of making telephone notifications required by 18 AAC 75.300(a) as discussed below. *Spill Reporter* is accessible at ReportSpills.alaska.gov.

Discussion:

It is in the interest of persons who are required to report oil and hazardous substance spillsⁱ and the department to have efficient reporting systems in place. The department is implementing *Spill Reporter* to make reporting easier and quicker.

Department regulations establish timeframes and methods of spill reporting in 18 AAC 75.300. 18 AAC 75.300(a) requires telephonic reporting to be completed prior to submitting a written notification report based on the spill volume and receiving environment. The department's goal is for *Spill Reporter* to become the primary spill reporting tool to accomplish telephone and written spill notification reporting requirements.



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The 24-hour toll-free spill reporting telephone line is an important component of reporting certain discharges or releases when using *Spill Reporter* as the primary platform. Some spill criteria triggers *Spill Reporter* to require immediate telephone notification to ensure the department can provide immediate assistance and oversight for spills of greater potential significance. Also, while the *Spill Reporter* form can be filled out offline, the person making the spill notification must have an internet connection to submit the spill report. The department will maintain the 24-hour toll-free spill reporting telephone line as an essential tool to allow spillers to make initial discharge or release notifications statewide, regardless of access to the internet or bandwidth limitations.

Until June 30, 2023, *Spill Reporter* is in an implementation phase. During this time, we will analyze its performance, review user feedback, and make technical or procedural adjustments as needed. Depending on user experience during this phase, we will evaluate the need for revising regulations to reflect use of *Spill Reporter* as the primary spill reporting format.

To remove barriers and create a realistic implementation phase of the online spill reporting portal, the department finds it necessary to provide assurance to spill reporters that they will not be subject to enforcement action if *Spill Reporter* is used in lieu of the required telephonic notifications.

The following actions are implemented to ensure smooth implementation of *Spill Reporter*.

Actions:

1. The department encourages spillers to report oil or other hazardous substance discharges or releases via the department's online spill reporting portal, *Spill Reporter*.
2. The department encourages persons using *Spill Reporter* to provide feedback to the department on the portal's functionality, user experience, and recommended improvements. Feedback may be provided to decspilldata@alaska.gov.
3. The department is suspending enforcement of the requirement to make telephonic notifications required under 18 AAC 75.300(a) through June 30, 2023, if the person making a discharge or release notification uses *Spill Reporter* and meets the following conditions:
 - a. The spiller uses *Spill Reporter* within the required timeframes in 18 AAC 75.300(a).
 - b. The spiller provides the most accurate information available about the spill at the time the initial notification is made.
 - c. The spiller was not directed by *Spill Reporter* to make a telephonic notification. If *Spill Reporter* instructs the user to contact the department using the 24-hour toll-free spill notification number, the spiller must do so immediately.
4. The three geographic spill reporting phone numbers listed on the previous versions of the Spill Reporting Placard will be maintained indefinitely, and spillers may use them for spill reporting during business hours if they choose not to use *Spill Reporter*. The updated Spill



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Reporting Placard lists only the 24-hour toll-free spill reporting number and the international reporting number.

5. The department encourages facilities that have posted Spill Reporting Placards to replace them with the new version. The new placard is attached, and it is available to be downloaded here: <https://dec.alaska.gov/media/17434/spill-reporting-placard.pdf>
6. Oil Discharge Prevention and Contingency Plan holders are not required to update the Spill Notification Placards within contingency plans prior to their next amendment or renewal application.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kara Krome".

for Graham Wood, Program Manager
Prevention, Preparedness, and Response Program
Division of Spill Prevention and Response

October 25, 2022

Date

¹ In this Guidance Document, when the term “spill” is used, it means either a discharge or a release of oil or other hazardous substances.