

# REGION 6 LEPC Update



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This month, three more articles for your knowledge base. The first is the annual announcement of one of the premier hazmat training opportunities, HOTZONE.

Next is a back to basics on LEPC roles, functions, structure, and responsibilities under the EPCRA statute.

The last was written by Joe Sepulveda, a Certified Hazardous Materials Specialist in the state of California, as well as a certified First Responder, Operational, Incident Commander with certification in OSHA 1910.120 HAZWOPER. The article is titled, "Preparing Spill Response," and advocates that "...no place is free from the potential for an emergency response spill if hazardous materials are present..."

As always, if you received this Update from someone else, and would like to be added to the email list, just email us at the email above.

Steve & Angie

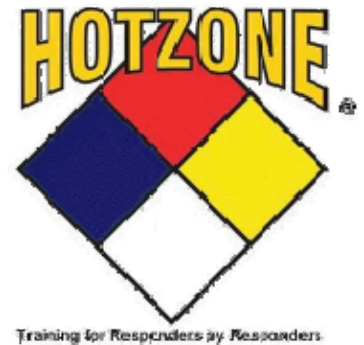
## It's time for the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual HOTZONE Conference

Each year, Region 6 is host to one of the premier hazardous materials training conferences.

The HOTZONE Committee is composed of representatives from the local, state, and federal levels of the HAZMAT response community serving Federal Region 6.

It is the vision of the HOTZONE Committee to establish an annual training conference in order to continuously improve HAZMAT technical training and promote professional relationships within Region 6 as well as meet the unique needs of this region.

To meet the unique needs of this region, this conference focuses on bringing together municipal and industrial fire fighters with HAZMAT responsibilities but also seeks to educate and equip other local, State, and Federal agency personnel who play an integral role in unified command at the scene.



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# ***HOTZONE is about you, the responder***

The goal of the HOTZONE conference is to train and equip local, state and federal responders for safe, coordinated and efficient response to releases of hazardous materials which threaten public health and the environment.

People who should attend include local fire, police, emergency management personnel, emergency medical services, health care providers, and state and federal response personnel who participate directly in the incident command system or in its immediate support at the scene of a hazmat response or terrorist event in Federal Region 6.

*THIS YEAR, HOTZONE 10 will be held:  
October 22-25, 2009  
Crowne Plaza Hotel - Reliant Park  
Houston, TX*



GO TO OUR WEBPAGE FOR MORE CONFERENCE INFORMATION, REGISTRATION, AND SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES [www.hotzone.org](http://www.hotzone.org)

## **Is there value in this conference for you?**

There are 3 or 4 hazardous materials conferences throughout the country that are considered to be the premier conferences for responders and local officials to attend.

What makes HOTZONE the best value?

- Top-notch instructors in the country volunteer their time and efforts to ensure a solid curriculum
- Many funding programs (State Homeland Security Grant (SHSGP) and Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) funds, as well as Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention (LETPP) funds to name just two) that can be used to offset the costs
- Very wide-ranging committee of federal, state, local, and non-profit entities work together to ensure that all phases of hazardous materials response is covered each year
- HOTZONE Committee and our valuable State / local partners provide numerous scholarships for attendees to offset or completely cover hotel and registration fees
- Each year, committee seriously considers all suggestions from attendees to improve for the next year (oh, and we actually implement most of them)
- Lots of networking opportunities with other responders, local, state and federal representatives
- Of all the premier conferences, our registration fees are almost half of others, and our hotel rates are reasonably priced at the state government rate
- **WE HAVE FUN, while making sure everyone gets first-class training and instruction!!!!**

Add it all up, and I think you will agree that HOTZONE continues to be a great value for all attendees!!

## **Hey, Do You Know What an LEPC Is or Does ??**



*I*f you have been involved with your LEPC for any period of time, you probably have been asked this question more than once.

If the question came from a new resident within your community, or new employee within your organization, then the inquiry gives you a welcomed opportunity to gain a new member to the LEPC. But if the question came from an existing LEPC member, that's not so good news.

The LEPC is a product of federal legislation passed in the wake of the Bhopal disaster in India, where thousands of people died because of an accident involving hazardous chemicals.

To prevent similar occurrences in our communities, Congress passed the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA), also known as Title III of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA), in 1986.

Title III was designed to combat only one type of disaster: hazardous materials.

The law has several provisions, including requirements for reporting releases of chemicals and requirements for the protection of responders.



The section relating to emergency planning and community right-to-know has the greatest impact on local government.

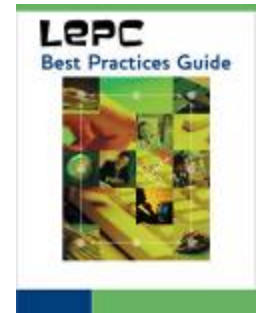
Two of the main goals of this law are to:

- Provide a basis for each community to develop and tailor a chemical emergency planning and response program to suit the community's needs, and
- Provide the public with a right-to-know attitude to identify, quantify, locate, and determine the physical and chemical properties of hazardous substances in the community.

Section 301 of EPCRA mandated the formation of LEPCs throughout the country, at the discretion of the State. The activities of the LEPC are overseen by the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) which is chaired by various State agencies, dependent on the State.

The Governor created the SERC in April of 1987. The SERC's purpose is to coordinate the state's planning and preparedness activities for hazardous materials compliance with Title III.

The LEPCs are made up of elected officials, members of emergency response groups, industry representatives, and other concerned citizens who are responsible not only for planning but also for providing information on chemical hazards to the citizens of each county.



EPCRA 301(c) mandates the representation on the LEPC shall include:

- Representatives of state and local elected officials: Elected officials should only be listed as LEPC members with their consent and agreement that they will attend meetings. It may be more practical for an elected official to have a staff person or a member of the local community represent that official on the LEPC.



- Local environmental groups: Individuals with an interest in the environmental impact from hazardous material use, storage, and transportation are intended to fill this category.

An environmental engineer employed by a facility or a consultant may have a conflict of interest due to a industrial relationship and, therefore, should not be appointed to the LEPC as an environmental representative but may serve as a representative of industry.

- Law enforcement: This includes all police agencies within the planning district.
- Hospital: A representative of the hospital/hospitals located within the planning district or of the hospital serving the community if none exists within the district.
- Broadcast and print media: A media representative is invaluable in advising the LEPC on news releases, public education and outreach goals and initiatives.



- Local government Emergency Management: Representative of an EMA established by ordinance.
- Transportation: Representative of an entity with experience transporting large numbers of people for input when developing evacuation plans.
- Firefighting: Representative of responding fire departments within the planning district.
- First aid or emergency medical service: Representative of responder emergency medical services.
- Community groups: Representatives of community groups, including the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, church service groups and Parent-Teacher Organizations. Members of the general public could also serve in this category.

- Health: County or city health departments or Visiting Nurse Association representatives would be valuable in identifying at-risk populations.
- Industry representatives, owners and operators of Regulated Facilities.

Because the LEPC's members represent the community, they should be familiar with factors that affect public safety, the environment, and the economy of the community.

### LEPC RESPONSIBILITIES

The major legal responsibilities as listed in EPCRA are listed below. Following each responsibility is the section of EPCRA containing the citation. Each LEPC:



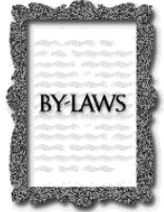
- Shall review local emergency management plans once a year, or more frequently as circumstances change in the community or as any facility may require (Section 303(a)).
- Shall make available each MSDS, chemical list described in Section 311(a)(2) or Tier II report, inventory form, and follow up emergency notice to the general public, consistent with Section 322, during normal working hours at a location designated by the LEPC (Section 324(a)).
- Shall establish procedures for receiving and processing requests from the public for information under Section 324, including Tier II information under Section 312. Such procedures shall include the designation of an official to serve as coordinator for information (301(c)).
- Shall receive from each subject facility the name of a facility representative who will participate in the emergency planning process as a facility emergency coordinator (Section 303(d)).
- Shall be informed by the community emergency coordinator of hazardous chemical releases reported by owners or operators of covered facilities (Section 304(b)(1)(a)).
- Shall be given follow-up emergency information as soon as practical after a release, which requires the owner/operator to submit a notice (Section 304 (c)).
- Shall receive from the owner or operator of any facility a MSDS for each chemical (upon request of the LEPC or fire department), or a list of such chemicals as described (Section 311(a)).
- Shall, upon request by any person, make available an MSDS to the person in accordance with Section 324 (Section 311(a)).
- Shall receive from the owner or operator of each facility an emergency and hazardous chemical inventory form (Section 312(a)).
- Shall respond to a request for Tier II information no later than 45 days after the date of receipt of the request (Section 312(e)).
- May commence a civil action against an owner or operator of a facility for failure to provide information under Section 303(d) or for failure to submit Tier II information under Section 312(e)(1) (Section 326(a)(2)(B)).



- Shall appoint a Chairperson, an Information Coordinator, and establish rules by which the committee shall function (Section 301(c)). Rules shall include provisions for public notification of committee activities, public meetings to discuss the emergency plan, public comments and response to such comments by the committee.

Other issues for consideration by the LEPC in its rulemaking are:

- Term of office
- Removal from the LEPC
- Authority of the LEPC
- Immunity for LEPC members
- Notification of the SERC of nominations for changes in the LEPC. The LEPC shall notify the SERC of address changes for LEPC chairpersons.



Hot off the press, the very first edition of the Desert Island Times caused the newspaper to quickly fold.

- Shall evaluate the need for resources necessary to develop, implement, and exercise the emergency management plan, and shall make recommendations with respect to additional resources that may be required and means for providing such additional resources (Section 303(a)).
- Shall annually publish a notice in local newspapers that the emergency management response plan, MSDS, follow-up release notifications, and inventory forms have been submitted (Section 324(b)).

In addition to its formal responsibilities, the LEPC serves as a focal point in the community for information and discussions about hazardous substances, emergency planning, and health and environmental risks.

Citizens will expect the LEPC to reply to questions about chemical hazards and risk management actions.

It can also anticipate questions about the extended and the health and environmental effects of routine toxic chemical releases.

Even though this information is not required by the law to be sent to LEPCs, EPA and the states are working together to ensure this information is available at the local level.

Many companies are voluntarily providing local committees and other citizens with this information.

An LEPC can most effectively carry out its responsibilities as a community forum by taking steps to educate the public about chemical risks, and working with facilities to minimize those risks.

The value of the information provided by the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act will be limited unless citizens are given the means to understand the information and its implications.

The LEPC's ability to improve the safety and health of its community will be greatly enhanced by the support of an informed and active citizenry.



# "The Practical Evaluation of Local Emergency Planning and Preparedness"

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SARA TITLE III PROGRAM OFFICIALS (NASTTPO)

The objective of this paper is not to simply restate the requirements of the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA). Rather it is intended to make observations on the practical aspects of local emergency planning and preparedness.



It is assumed that the reader has some background in the provisions of EPCRA and those will not be restated here.

LEPCs are the backbone of EPCRA. They are typically a collection of volunteers made up of local government employees, first response agencies, facility representatives and members of the public.

While EPCRA does contain a list of desired membership background and representation, most LEPCs do not have members in all those categories. Rarely will an LEPC have a staff and even less often will that staff be either paid or applied to LEPC functions on a full-time basis.

The typical LEPC functions without a budget or with only a small amount of money frequently in the form of grants from the SERC.

The chair and LEPC members often provide support from their own pockets or with discretionary funds from their employer's budgets.

LEPCs are frequently organized within the offices of a first response agency or local government office of emergency management.

In such cases it can be difficult to identify where the parent agency's activities end and the LEPC's begin.

The functions are obviously complementary and therefore that distinction is frequently misleading or of little importance in the day-to-day planning and preparedness of the community.



## Planning

A limited reading of EPCRA gives the impression that the LEPCs are suppose to develop emergency response plans for hazardous substances.

This can create a conflict if it is routine for such plans to already exist within first response agencies and local emergency management offices.



An LEPC that is housed within one of these agencies will have typically been involved in its planning activities.

More independent LEPCs will frequently be active in providing information and input to these agencies in order to help them improve the plans.

In some communities the LEPC has become a broader all-hazards emergency planning agency within the community.

This happens when the cooperation and resources available within the LEPC make this the most efficient approach for that community.

While not all SERCs have adopted policies on the coordination between LEPCs and other planning agencies, most encourage whatever arrangement is most productive for the community.



Most LEPCs consider and adopt projects based upon core missions they feel are important in the community.

These may involve any variety of matters, but are generally focused on a desire to protect first responders and the public through better information and awareness of risks in the community.

Consideration must be given to the resources available and the interests of the members.

Most SERCs will support a vast range of LEPC activities as long as they have some relationship to the intent of EPCRA.

The greatest tool available to an LEPC is its very substantial information gathering power. However, most SERCs encourage LEPCs to do more than just collect boxes of paper.

Many LEPCs focus their activities on information requests that bring facilities into closer cooperation with the first responder community.

Examples are fire department approval of contingency plans, exercise organization and public awareness of expected behavior during an emergency.

LEPCs also perform a generalized role in community-wide efforts to improve public awareness of risks and preparedness for emergencies. They will encourage the very basic things such as 72-hour emergency kits, first aid training, and household safety.



Often they will work on projects such as household hazardous waste collection, school lab chemical safety and the hazards of methamphetamine labs.

Most SERCs will encourage LEPCs to think expansively as there are a myriad of other activities that may be useful in a community.

The late Jim Makris - widely called the "father" of EPCRA - once said that its best to think of LEPCs as local "environmental" protection committees as he saw them working more broadly to improve conditions in their communities.

## Organization & Membership

LEPC membership is approved by the SERCs. Once an LEPC is established, SERCs will have some procedure or policy by which the committees are responsible for advising the SERCs of their membership changes and seeking approval.

Whether or not an LEPC has "officers" beyond a chair is a matter of state practice and policy.

The chair typically functions as the point of contact for the SERC, the public and for regulated facilities.

Broad membership is encouraged. While there is a list of membership types in EPCRA, SERCs recognize that it is not realistic to find all of those types of people in every community.

On the other hand, membership should not be limited. Anyone with an interest, a desire to assist with projects, and good manners should be encouraged to join and participate.



By-laws are not required in most states, but they are commonly used. The function of by-laws is primarily to provide some structure to membership decisions and the election of the chair.

As a practical matter LEPCs tend to function in a consensus fashion rather than using a formal vote process. Exceptions would be the rare event when the LEPC intends to pursue legal enforcement of its information requests under EPCRA.

### Dealing with Facilities

The power of LEPCs is to obtain information relevant to emergency planning. Both owners and operators of facilities are responsible for providing this information.

While some reports, Tier II for example, are automatic under EPCRA and state laws, the real power in LEPC information requests is the ability to focus the request on the specific facility and community involved.

LEPCs should articulate why they are asking for information beyond the routine Tier II form. There are, of course, many potential reasons.

The point is that when asking a facility for additional information it should be clear to that facility that the information is important to the community.

LEPCs will often look to provide facilities with the opportunity to demonstrate their good corporate citizenship. Many facilities try hard to reduce risks and support first responders.

Through exercises, public meetings and other activities it is important for LEPCs to recognize and reward these activities.



### Dealing with the Public

As a general rule, all EPCRA-related information in the possession of an LEPC is publically available.

Requests for information, such as Tier II data and CAA Sec. 112r Risk Management Plans, can come to an LEPC.

They should have procedures in place to notify the public that this information is available and instructions on how it can be obtained.



LEPCs should encourage the public to participate with the LEPC. If members of the public have questions about preparedness or facility safety, it is always appropriate to ask the public to attend a meeting to discuss their concerns.

Often an LEPC will refer facility-specific inquiries directly to the facility.

While this can be effective in improving facility / public relations in many cases, it is equally true that the involvement of the LEPC will be useful in creating some context for the discussion.

Accident prevention is primarily the responsibility of facilities.

Nonetheless, LEPCs and first responder organizations are just as responsible to the public as the facility when it comes to community preparedness.

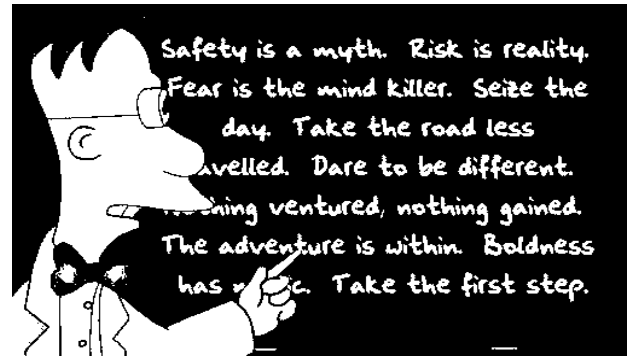
Assurances of accident prevention programs only address part of the overarching community planning and preparedness equation.

Effective preparedness involves the facility, the community and individuals merging answers to these three key questions:





- What are the accident risks of this facility and how are they being prevented?
- What are the plans and capabilities of the community should an accident happen?
- What do I do to protect myself and those I am responsible for during an emergency?



### The Broader Mission

One of the most difficult tasks faced by an LEPC is creating a public awareness of risks and improving community preparedness. LEPCs should look for opportunities through the schools, civic groups, youth programs, churches and any other organization active in the community to accomplish this mission.

This means that LEPCs must embrace a broader sense of community responsibility for accident prevention and preparedness. It is not appropriate to be a passive collector of information.

With this in mind the following “Golden Rules” are proposed for the broader community.



Preferably it is the LEPCs that should lead the process of addressing the goals stated in the Golden Rules, but that really is not the complete point.

Whether or not an LEPC exists, leadership within a community needs to be focused on these issues.

Leadership comes from various places depending upon the community, it may be elected leadership, first response agencies or community groups.

Whether or not called an LEPC, the functions must exist or no community will be adequately involved in accident prevention or preparedness.

State and federal agencies along with facilities should have an expectation that communities will address these issues.

They cannot be passive in this regard. The risk is shared and the responsibility is equally shared.

Preparedness cannot be imposed on a community nor can it be provided from outside.

All stakeholders have a responsibility to find and encourage appropriate leadership within the community.

The era of passivity in accident prevent and community preparedness is gone.

Whether facility, government, first response agency or member of the public, we are all connected and we all have a role.

The best examples of local emergency planning and preparedness focused on trying to follow the Golden Rules will have the following attributes:

- A close relationship between emergency planners and first response agencies.
- A close relationship between facilities and these agencies and the public.
- Information sharing on hazards, accident prevention efforts and emergency response.
- Public involvement in developing expectations for public behavior during an emergency.
- Repeated exercises of emergency response plans including public education.
- Generalized all-hazards preparedness efforts developed with public involvement.





We are mindful that in the past the regulatory environment has tended to create an adversary relationship between communities and facilities.

From topics as diverse as land use planning and environmental permitting through emergency response, the relationship is often confrontational.

LEPCs are not regulatory agencies.

They have the capacity to break through this barrier for the greater good of their communities.

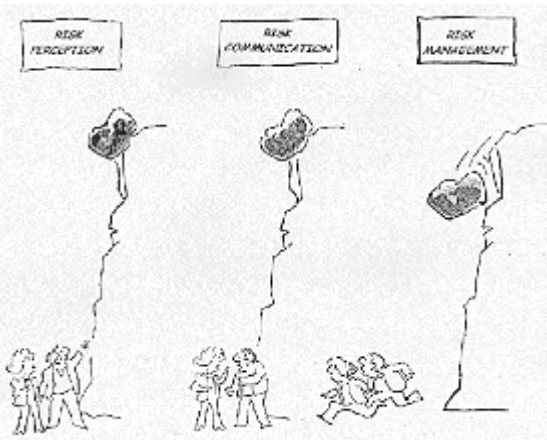
### Golden Rules For Communities

- While the primary responsibilities lie with the industry, there are important responsibilities for stakeholders at the local level.

An important aspect of making the facilities safer to the community in which they exist is the communities' involvement with prevention and preparedness objectives.

- Be aware of the risks in your community and know what to do in the event of an accident.

Members of communities near hazardous installations, and others that might be affected in the event of an accident, should make sure that they understand the risks they face and what to do in the event of an accident to mitigate possible adverse effects on health, the environment and property (e.g., understand the warning signals, and what actions are appropriate). This involves reading and maintaining any information they receive, sharing this information with others, and seeking additional information as appropriate.



- Communicate and co-operate with other stakeholders on all aspects of accident prevention, preparedness, and response.

The community should not pressure the industry, but instead there should be an open policy between the community and the industry, and a shared objective of reducing the likelihood of accidents.

The potentially affected public should receive information needed to support prevention and preparedness objectives, and should participate in decision making related to hazardous installations, as appropriate.

- Participate in decision-making relating to hazardous installations

The laws in many communities provide opportunities for members of the public to participate in decision-making related to hazardous installations, for example by commenting on proposed regulations or zoning, or providing input for procedures concerning licensing or siting of specific installations.

Members of the public should take advantage of these opportunities to present the perspective of the community. They should work towards ensuring that such opportunities exist whenever appropriate, and that the public has the information necessary for effective participation.

- Know the hazards and risks at installations in your community where there are hazardous substances.

The community should undertake, in co-operation with other stakeholders, the hazard identification and risk assessments needed for a complete understanding of the risks to the public, the environment, and property in the event of an accident.

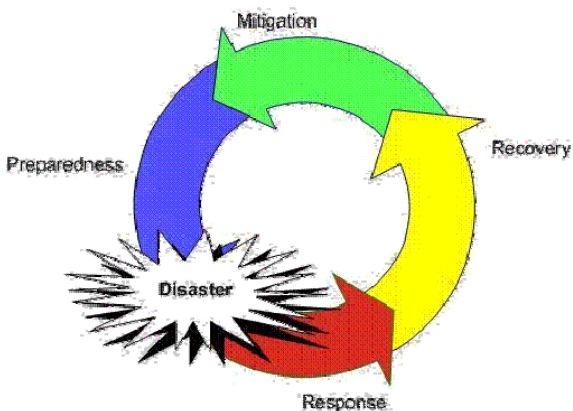
Hazard identification and risk assessments should be undertaken from the earliest stages of design and construction, throughout operation and maintenance, and should address the possibilities of human or technological failures, as well as releases resulting from natural disasters or deliberate acts (such as terrorism, sabotage, vandalism, or theft). Such assessments should be repeated periodically and whenever there are significant modifications to the installation.

- Prepare for any accidents that occur.

It is important to recognize that it is not possible to totally eliminate the risk of an accident.

Therefore, it is critical to have appropriate preparedness planning in order to minimize the likelihood and extent of any adverse effects on health, the environment or property.

The community should conduct, in co-operation with other stakeholders, any off-site planning including provision of information to the potentially affected public.



- Co-operate with local authorities, and industry, in emergency planning and response.

Representatives of the community should take advantage of opportunities to provide input into the emergency planning process, both with respect to on-site and off-site plans.

In addition, members of the public should co-operate with any tests or exercises of emergency plans, following directions and providing feedback, as appropriate.

- Assist other stakeholders to carry out their respective roles and responsibilities.

The community should co-operate with management and employee representatives and public authorities in order to promote communication and involvement from all stakeholders involved.

## Preparing Spill Response

*"No place is free from the potential for an emergency response spill if hazardous materials are present."*

By Joe Sepulveda

WHETHER a company stores, uses, or transports hazardous materials (hazmat), there is always the potential for a chemical spill.

And beyond regulatory requirements that all employees are trained to handle chemical spills, it is also the responsibility of an owner to keep employees safe when doing so.

Below are answers to some of the most commonly asked questions about emergency response spills, as well as some tips on how companies can be better prepared in recognizing different types of spills and how to respond.



Any incident involving the spill/release of hazardous chemicals, mixtures of such chemicals, or hazardous waste that requires the intervention of spill cleanup specialists to contain and remove the spilled material safely is an emergency response spill. A HAZWOPER-trained team (29 CFR 1910.120) must manage these spills.

Every leak or spill should be evaluated to determine whether it has crossed that threshold beyond which any spill cleanup must be performed by specifically trained and equipped personnel.

## 1. What are the different types of hazmat spills?

Releases (spills) can be categorized into three distinct groups in terms of emergency recognition:

- Releases that are clearly incidental.
- Releases that may be incidental or may require emergency response, depending upon circumstances.
- Releases that clearly require emergency response.



Emergency recognition must be employed to distinguish between "incidental spills" and those requiring emergency response.

OSHA defines an incidental release or spill as "a release of a hazardous substance which does not pose a significant safety or health hazard to employees in the immediate vicinity or to the worker cleaning it up, nor does it have the potential to become an emergency."

Incidental spills do not require an emergency response, and therefore do not require HAZWOPER-trained cleanup personnel. They may be cleaned up by employees working in the area where the spill occurred or by maintenance personnel.

Incident spill response personnel do need to be trained in Hazard Communication and to use appropriate personal protective equipment consistent with the federal or state OSHA standards under which they are regulated.

Incidental spill responders may absorb, neutralize, or otherwise control a spill, so long as doing so does not expose them to significantly greater risk than is posed by routine handling or use of the hazardous material.

## 2. What is an emergency response spill?

Some spills will clearly require emergency response. Examples include high levels of toxic substances, situations immediately dangerous to life and health (IDLH), and fire or explosion hazards exceeding 25 percent of their lower explosion limit.

If however, area employees are not certified to don appropriate respiratory protection, a spill that could potentially exceed the ceiling permissible exposure limit would also require an emergency response.



An emergency response spill is defined by 29 CFR 1910.120 as follows: response efforts conducted by employees outside of the immediate area of release or by other designated responders (fire departments, internal hazmat teams, etc.) to an occurrence which results, or is likely to result, in an uncontrolled release of a hazardous substance.

There is no single factor upon which this determination may be made, beyond the initial assessment as to whether or not the spilled material is hazardous.

A key factor, however, is the actual volume of the spilled material. A very-small-volume spill is obviously less likely to pose a significant risk to personnel than a large spill of the same material and is unlikely to escalate into an emergency response.

Even a very small spill of a highly toxic chemical with physical properties that would provide a potential for exposure, such as a respirable hazard, could cross the emergency response threshold.

Factors that must be considered in this risk determination include:

- Nature of the hazard properties of the material (i.e., flammability, corrosivity, toxicity, etc.),
- Degree of hazard and routes of entry if toxic,
- Physical state (powder, granular, liquid, gaseous),
- Physical properties, and
- Specific circumstances of the release must be considered. These include the location of the spill, the level of ventilation, and the knowledge and experience of area personnel.

### 3. Where do emergency response spills typically occur?

Emergency response spills have the potential to occur anywhere: at hospitals and power plants, in hardware stores, and highway accidents. No place is free from the potential for an emergency response spill if hazardous materials are present.

Rarely is an emergency response spill expected. A spill occurs only when a system of hazardous material containment fails, usually as a result of a chain of unfortunate events.

The potential for chemical spills exists anywhere these materials are stored, used, or transported, and unforeseen chemical spills can threaten employees, customers, and the general public.

Even when personnel are safely evacuated from the spill zone, emergency response spills often lead to serious business interruption, facility or environmental damage, as well as other potential for financial impact.



### 4. How should I prepare for emergency response spills?

Emergency response preparedness and planning is a very detailed and costly program that involves equipping and training a hazmat team:



- Training typically includes 24 to 40 hours of combined classroom education and "hands-on" instruction in practical spill response techniques. OSHA mandates annual refresher training, and prudent EHS managers recognize the need for frequent drilling to maintain team readiness.
- Typical equipment for even a modest team would include protective clothing, air monitoring equipment, self-contained breathing apparatus, tools, and absorbent materials that can cost thousands of dollars. In addition, maintaining a hazmat team requires a considerable investment in time.
- Equipment requirements vary depending upon the nature of the potential emergency response scenarios to which the hazmat team is expected to respond.
- Time must be provided for emergency response planning (including pre-emergency assessment for on-site teams), developing resources for cooperation, annual medical evaluations, developing safety and health programs, performing recurrent training, maintaining personal protective equipment programs, air monitoring equipment maintenance, and preparation for decontamination procedures.

Another consideration is that staffing an in-house emergency response team is acceptance of sole legal responsibility, not only for the trained personnel but for the effectiveness of the response and subsequent cleanup.

5. What are the alternatives to in-house emergency response staffing?

The alternative to training, equipping, and maintaining an emergency response team is to outsource emergency response, should a significant spill of hazardous materials occur.

Local government may provide an outsource alternative through emergency response teams hosted by fire departments or county or parish environmental agencies.



Though this approach may serve a company's needs, it is prudent to confirm the availability and willingness of local agencies to assume responsibility for cleaning up hazardous substance spills.



In most circumstances, outsourcing means identifying and qualifying an emergency response contractor (or perhaps two or three, to ensure availability) to respond on an on-call basis to spill events.

Qualifying contractors is essential and best performed by an environmental professional aware of appropriate criteria and experienced in such evaluations.

Alternatively, many companies contract with environmental, health, and safety information providers that pre-qualify local emergency response contractors and provide a call center to manage emergency responses, interact with regulatory agencies, and perform subsequent reporting in the event of an emergency response spill.

6. What are the criteria to consider when selecting an outsourced provider?

When selecting a call center outsource for spill response, remember these useful tips:

Find a center that handles a very large number of spills on a regular basis. It is likely the personnel will have a knowledge base of similar incidents that can be leveraged when responding to the user's spill; this is also an advantage in the related reporting tasks afterwards.

Remember the importance of user profiles with user procedures so the responder may be familiar with the unique needs of the environment.

Spill response personnel also must have immediate access to a rich MSDS database.

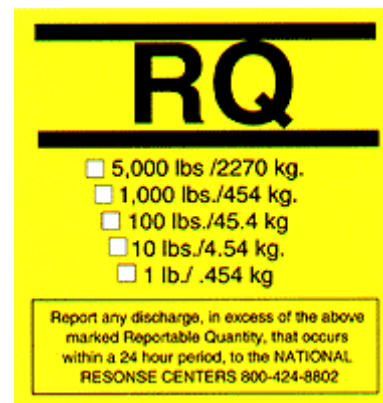
7. What reporting of the spill is required?

Release reporting requirements vary based on the location of the spill, the nature and volume of material spilled, and the activities associated with the spill event.

Federal, state, and local agencies mandate reporting requirements that can be quite involved.

These include but are not limited to EPA, which requires immediate reporting of a release of a chemical defined under CERCLA as a "hazardous substance" that meets or exceeds the reportable quantity (RQ).

EPA also mandates reporting of spills under EPCRA, which requires reporting to state and LEPCs should the EPCRA thresholds be exceeded.



In addition, should a facility have a transportation issue on a public highway, the Department of Transportation may require that the spill be reported to the National Response Center.



In summary, preparing to deal effectively with a significant spill of hazardous materials is good business, but the implementation of an in-house emergency response team can be very costly and time consuming.

Many companies are not willing to take on the additional responsibilities and cost for such a program.

For these firms, a wise alternative may be found in environmental, health, and safety information service providers that offer emergency response management and spill reporting 24/7/365.

Whatever the selected approach--internal team development or outsourced assistance--the key to success in the event of a hazardous materials spill is preparation.

## Region 6 Emergency Notification Numbers

Arkansas Dept. of Emergency Management	800-322-4012
Louisiana State Police	877-925-6595
New Mexico State Police	505-827-9126
Oklahoma Dept. of Environmental Quality	800-522-0206
Texas Environmental Hotline	800-832-8224
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National Response Center	800-424-8802
EPA Region 6	866-372-7745
CHEMTREC	800-424-9300