

HOW TO MAKE & USE AN OIL SPILL KIT



What is a Spill Kit?

A spill kit is a collection of items, to be used in case of a spill, leak or other discharge of oil. Spill kits are developed so that a prompt response and clean-up may be performed.

What are the contents of a spill kit?

A spill kit usually contains two or three types of equipment. First is protective clothing or Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). The second is equipment used to clean up the spill. Third, some kits include equipment to stop leakage. Each is explained in more detail below.

What personal protective equipment (PPE) should be in a used oil spill kit?

The contents of a spill kit will vary depending upon the type of material that has been spilled and the size of the spill. For the purpose of this worksheet, we will only be addressing used oil spills. We will speak of small spill are those of five gallon or less, and large spills as those greater that five gallons.

Small Spill Kits-

A small spill kit should contain at least the following elements:

- ☐ Gloves;
- ☐ Sorbent; and
- ☐ A container to collect and store the clean-up material.

It might also be helpful to have a whisk broom, a dust pan, and a heavy duty plastic bag to line your collection container. By keeping it clean you may be able to re-use it. All of this should easily fit inside a 5-gallon, covered, plastic pail. The pail should be labeled so anyone can clearly identify it as a spill kit. The cover should be placed loosely on top to keep the contents dry and clean, but the pail should be easy to open.

Large Spill Kits-

A large spill kit should contain the following elements:

- ☐ Protective clothing for two people. Larger spills should be cleaned up by at least two people. Protective clothing could include coveralls or a Tyvec® suit, gloves, boot covers, goggles or safety glasses and duct tape. Use common sense to determine the level of danger and if other gear (i.e. helmets or steel toed boots) or outside assistance is needed.

- Try to imagine the worst case scenario and plan accordingly. This will help you to address problems before they happen and to have the materials on hand for the totally unexpected. If spills into secondary containment are likely, a pump might be needed to suck it dry. Plugs and patching material may be needed if a forklift accidentally punctures a drum of oil. A sufficient number, type and size of sorbents should be available to clean up the size of spill that is likely to occur at your facility.
- When a cleanup is needed it may be helpful to have extra drums on hand. You can then transfer the oil from a damaged drum to a good container. Also, over pack drums are available. They are a little bigger than a 55-gallon drum and the damaged or leaking container may be put inside the over pack drum. The larger containers may also be used to hold sorbents after they have soaked up the oil.

Many spill kits are made using a drum or over pack container. All of the PPE and spill clean-up materials may be stored in the large container until needed.

How do I pack a Spill Kit?

Small spill kits should be packed with plastic bags in the bottom, sorbents in the middle, and protective clothing (i.e. gloves and safety glasses) on top. The first thing you'll use is the protective clothing so make sure you can see it and get to it quickly as soon as the kit is opened.

Large spill kits are packed similarly, with the protective clothing on top. Due to the size of larger containers some special considerations should be taken when packing the additional equipment. Put sorbents and tools in large, sturdy, plastic bags so that the top of each bag can be reached without dumping the kit on its side or reaching way into the drum. Sorbent socks will be needed first to stop the flow of oil, so they should be packed right under the PPE. The remaining sorbents, whether pads, pillows, or loose should be packed next. A shovel (there are collapsible models), broom and extra plastic bags should be packed toward the bottom of the kit.

What type of sorbents should I use?

Please see the "Used Oil Sorbent Information Sheet". This information sheet includes tips on buying, using and disposing of sorbents. Don't forget to consider the option of recycling sorbents.

Where can I purchase Spill Kits?

Spill Kits may be purchased through many supply catalogs, industry warehouses, or you can make your own. Ready-made kits may range in price from \$30.00 for a 5-gallon pail, to \$300.00 for a basic drum kit. You will likely save a fair bit of money by purchasing your own garbage can or covered pail and then separately purchasing gloves, coverall, sorbents and other equipment. You will want to keep extra supplies on hand and restock your spill kit immediately after each use.