SECONDARY CONTAINMENT



Pollution Prevention Assistance

THURSTON COUNTY
WASHINGTON
SINCE 1852

Thurston County Business Pollution Prevention Program
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Small changes make a BIG difference!

WHY SECONDARY CONTAINMENT

The Thurston County Nonpoint Source Pollution Ordinance (Article VI of the Sanitary Code) requires that hazardous materials and wastes be handled, stored, and disposed of in a manner that is protective of the environment and human health. Specifically, Section 4.1(b) states:

"Moderate risk waste, petroleum products, and hazardous materials shall be kept in containers and shall be stored in such a manner and location that if the container is ruptured, the contents will not discharge, flow, be washed or fall into surface water or groundwater. This does not supersede any regulations as stated in the Uniform Fire Code."

This means that you must properly store all hazardous liquids, waste, and materials so there is no risk that any spills could impact the environment. To comply with this section, secondary containment is required for any hazardous material that has the potential to reach the environment (i.e. soil, surface water, etc.) if the primary container is ruptured.

WHAT IS SECONDARY CONTAINMENT?

To have secondary containment means a primary container of chemicals is stored within a separate impervious container under or around it that can contain a release from the primary container.

HOW MUCH CONTAINMENT IS NEEDED

The size and design of a secondary containment unit depends on the type and amount of hazardous material that it holds. The following options satisfy Thurston County's storage requirements:

- Store hazardous liquids in UL-certified double-walled storage tanks.
- Store hazardous containers indoors on a liquid-tight floor without additional containment as long as the material will not reach the environment if it is released.
- Store hazardous materials and dangerous waste containers in secondary containment units that can hold 110 percent of the volume of the largest storage container or 10 percent of the total volume stored, whichever is greatest, plus the displacement volume of any items inside the containment.

Outdoor secondary containment of hazardous materials should be covered to reduce or eliminate the need to manage contaminated rainwater. Rain can displace the capacity of the secondary containment, so that if a spill does occur the hazardous material could enter the environment. Additionally, if rainwater is within the secondary containment when a leak occurs, it will become contaminated and will also have to be disposed of as a dangerous waste.

CHEMICAL COMPATIBILITY AND STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY

- The structural materials used in secondary containment units, including expansion joints and seals, must be chemically compatible with the hazardous chemical(s) that will be contained.
- Secondary containment must be adequate to hold a release and remain liquid-tight.
- Incompatible chemicals should be stored in separate containment systems so they cannot mix and react if there is a spill or leak.

SPILLS

Chemical spills must be cleaned up immediately and disposed of as hazardous waste. Having an appropriate spill kit in chemical storage areas can reduce the response time of cleanups.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information, including how to set up a free on-site technical assistance visit:

- Call the Thurston County Hazardous Waste program at 360-867-2664 / TDD 360-867-2603
- Email PHSSPollutionPrevention@co.thurston.wa.us
- Visit our website at www.co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehhw/index.html

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