

Reporting Spills and Releases

The *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act* (EPEA) requires any release of substances that could cause an adverse effect to the environment be reported to Alberta Environment and Parks.

The *Release Reporting Regulation* sets out what must be reported, when, how and to whom reports must be made. Individual approvals and codes of practice may also have requirements for reporting contraventions of the terms and conditions of the approval or code of practice, monitoring results and sampling programs.

When to Report

Releases of a substance into the environment that **may** cause, **is** causing or **has** caused an adverse effect must be reported to Alberta Environment and Parks. An adverse effect is impairment of, or damage to, the environment, human health or safety, or property.

Who Must Report

The person who releases, causes or permits the release, or has control of the substance released, is responsible for reporting.

Prompt reporting helps to ensure adverse impacts are addressed properly and minimized if possible, and directly affected parties are notified.

How to Report

Releases must be reported to Alberta Environment and Parks at the **first available opportunity** as soon as the person responsible knows or should know about the release.

Reports can be made:

- By phoning 1-800-222-6514
- In person at any Alberta Environment and Parks office

Electronic reporting *may* also be available. For further information please contact your regional Alberta Environment and Parks office.

When reporting, please provide:

- The location and time of the release;
- A description of the circumstances leading to the release;
- The type and quantity of substance released;
- The details of any action proposed or taken at the release site; and
- A description of the immediate surrounding area.

A reference number will be issued to confirm that the report was made.

Written Report

A written report must be submitted to the appropriate Alberta Environment and Parks Director within seven days after the immediate report.

Written reports must include:

- The date and time of the release;
- The location of the release;
- The duration of the release and the release rate;
- The concentration, total weight, quantity or amount released;
- A detailed description of the circumstances leading to the release;
- The steps or procedures which were taken to minimize, control or stop the release;
- The steps or procedures which will be taken to prevent similar releases in the future; and
- Any other information required by the Director.

Written reports can be sent by:

Fax: (780) 427-3178

Email: ERC.Environment@gov.ab.ca

or mailed to:

Alberta Environment and Parks
Environmental Response Centre
#111, Twin Atria Building
4999 — 98 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T6B 2X3

What Doesn't Have to be Reported

Generally, releases of the following substances do not have to be reported to the department:

- Substances released according to an approval or code of practice;
- Substances regulated by the *Oil and Gas Conservation Act* or the *Dangerous Goods Transportation and Handling Act* (these types of releases may need to be reported to other regulators).

The release of these substances are reportable if:

- It has caused, is causing or may cause an adverse effect;
- The amount exceeds the quantities or emission levels set out in the legislation, guideline, approval or code of practice; and/or
- The release is into a groundwater or surface water body.

If unsure whether the quantities or levels are exceeded, the release should be reported.

What Happens After You Report

Alberta Environment and Parks responds to all reports. The first priority is always to ensure that any spill or release is contained and appropriately cleaned up.

The department also ensures all appropriate authorities are notified to ensure proper response efforts are underway.

After the situation is being appropriately managed and is under control, the department will work to gather more information about the release incident to determine the cause of the release and how to prevent future releases.

Once this is complete, a decision is made on whether enforcement action is necessary, and what that enforcement action should be.

Penalties for Not Reporting

Failure to report a release of a substance causing an adverse effect on the environment can result in a fine of up to \$100,000 and a year in jail for an individual, and a \$500,000 fine for an organization or company.

For More Information

For more information about release reporting requirements, contact the Alberta Environment and Parks regional office nearest you.

- aep.alberta