

SPILL PREVENTION, CONTROL AND COUNTERMEASURES

DESCRIPTION

Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasures (SPCC) is the name given to a regulation written to prevent the release of oil to navigable waters of the United States.

SCOPE

For SPCC purposes, oil includes petroleum products (fuels, motor oils, heating oil, mineral oil, asphalt), fruit/nut/vegetable oils, oils from coal, and synthetic oils. In general, oils have a specific gravity less than 1 and do not mix with water.

REGULATED COMMUNITY

In general, any facility that has an aggregate aboveground oil storage capacity greater than 1,320 gallons in containers with a capacity of 55 gallons or greater is regulated, and must prepare an SPCC plan.

REQUIREMENTS

There are numerous regulatory requirements associated with the SPCC rule. Some of the major requirements include:

- Regulated facilities are required to prepare an SPCC plan which may need to be stamped/sealed by a professional engineer (though in some instances you can self-certify), setting forth the engineering controls and countermeasures in place to prevent the discharge of oil.
- Bulk storage containers (tanks, vessels, containers, drums, etc.) require secondary containment to prevent the discharge of oil to navigable waters.
- If secondary containment is determined to be impractical, an Oil Spill Contingency Plan must be prepared as part of the SPCC plan.
- All employees handling oil are required to be trained once per year.
- Oil storage areas are required to be inspected (usually monthly) by specific facility personnel.

Additional requirements apply to oil production facilities.

ADMINISTERED BY

The SPCC rule is administered by the United States Environmental Protection Agency. To date, SPCC oversight has not been delegated to states. That said, California has implemented state-level regulations that mirror the SPCC rule requirements and administers them through their Certified Unified Program Agencies (CUPAs), which are typically county or city level agencies. Other states have implemented SPCC-like regulations whose requirements are met by adhering to federal SPCC requirements (Colorado, Maine).

REGULATORY AUTHORITY

Regulatory authority for the SPCC rule is provided under §311 of the Clean Water Act (CWA). The CWA serves as the legal basis for the US Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) to develop the SPCC rule, which is set forth in 40 CFR §112.