

WS Directive

2.640 09/30/11

RESPONDING TO OIL SPILLS, HAZARDOUS MATERIALS OPERATIONS

1. PURPOSE

To establish general safety guidelines and responsibilities for Wildlife Services (WS) personnel assisting in wildlife recovery, hazing, and other activities related to oil spills and hazardous materials events or sites.

2. REPLACEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

This is a new Directive.

3. BACKGROUND

WS has become increasingly involved with conducting wildlife recovery and other activities in response to hazards posed when oil spills or hazardous materials events occur. This policy applies to WS personnel who participate in field activities where there is potential for exposure to hazardous materials, substances, or wastes that may present a health hazard. Hazardous waste is any material that is defined in [40 CFR Section 261.3](#). This policy does not apply to pesticide or immobilization/euthanasia applications, allergens or irritants encountered in normal daily activities, or laboratories.

4. DEFINITIONS

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

- a. Level A – The greatest level of skin, respiratory and eye protection. Requires specialized training and certified respirator fit testing.
- b. Level B – The greatest level of respiratory protection is necessary but a lesser level of skin protection is needed. Requires specialized training and certified respirator fit testing.
- c. Level C – The concentration(s) and type(s) of airborne substance(s) is known and the criteria for using air purifying respirators are met. Requires specialized training and certified respirator fit testing.
- d. Level D – Nuisance contamination only. Atmosphere contains no known hazards. A work uniform affords minimal protection. The following constitute level D protection; Coveralls or suitable work uniform, appropriate boots/shoes, and gloves, boot coverings, safety glasses or chemical splash goggles, hard hat (all as optional and as applicable and appropriate).

5. POLICY

a. All WS personnel working directly within a spill area must be certified and current with approved Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER) training. There must also be at least one WS person with 40 hours of certified HAZWOPER training assisting with the response.

b. WS employees will not enter sites classified as Levels A, B, or C unless entry is absolutely essential as determined and approved by the Regional Director or NWRC Director or their representative. Certified and trained WS employees may be allowed to enter hazardous waste sites classified as level D when approved by on-site project leaders or their supervisors as designated by a WS State Director or NWRC Project Leader.

c. Project Leaders and/or other Supervisors are responsible for:

1. Ensuring that employees who participate are fully trained in all aspects of responsibilities in their hazardous materials operations, and all appropriate certifications are valid and current.
2. Ensuring that employees under their supervision receive appropriate medical monitoring.
3. Ensuring that employees are informed of the appropriate PPE required while on site.
4. Consulting with the designated on-site safety manager to ensure that hazardous sites are monitored by appropriate and qualified personnel to detect potential emerging or changing hazards prior to, and during employee occupation.
5. Prohibiting WS employees from entering hazardous material sites which are classified as Levels A through C, unless properly approved.

d. All WS employees working directly within a designated spill area shall:

1. Observe and follow all policies and procedures required for the tasks assigned.
2. Participate in daily safety briefings as required.
3. Maintain and wear the appropriate PPE, and follow safety protocols.
4. Maintain a current tetanus vaccination status.
5. Report any substandard safety items to the safety officer and to their Supervisor/Project Leader as appropriate.
6. Report any injury/incident/accident/illness to the safety officer and to their Supervisor/Project Leader as appropriate.

6. RELEVANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Any WS State program or NWRC Field Station that is initially asked to assist with an oil spill response should contact the WS Surveillance and Emergency Response System (SERS) Toll Free phone number at **(877) 303-6363** and the appropriate WS Regional Office for proper notification.

7. REPORTING CHEMICAL SPILLS

To report a spill, contact the federal government's centralized reporting center, the National Response Center (NRC), at **1-800-424-8802**. The NRC is staffed 24 hours a day by U.S. Coast Guard personnel. The individual reporting the spill should be prepared to provide as much information about the incident as possible.

8. REFERENCES

[Executive Order 12196, Occupational Safety and Health Programs for Federal Employees \(02/26/1980\)](#)
[Title 29 CFR Section 1910.120, Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response \(04/3/06\)](#)
[Title 29 CFR Section 1960, Basic Program Elements for Federal Employees, Occupational Safety and Health Programs \(10/21/08\)](#)
[Title 40 CFR Section 261.3, Definition of Hazardous Waste \(07/01/09\)](#)
[WS Directive 2.120, National Wildlife Disease Surveillance and Emergency Response Program \(10/07/05\)](#)
[WS Directive 2.601, Safety \(10/07/05\)](#)
[WS Directive 2.620, WS Aviation Safety and Operations \(02/08/09\)](#)
[WS Directive 2.625, Pyrotechnics, Rocket Net Charges and Incidental Explosive Materials \(01/06/06\)](#)
[WS Directive 2.630, Watercraft Use \(6/17/09\)](#)
[WS Directive 2.635, Zoonotic Diseases and Personal Protection Equipment \(04/29/09\)](#)



Deputy Administrator