

Prevention of Spills

2.6.1

Before You Spill Anything!

Be Prepared

Nobody ever intends to create a spill! Yet, in a manufacturing plant, warehouse, paint store, car boot, workshop, building site or wherever paint is stored or used, the **potential** for spillage is always there. Where there is potential of spillage, there is the opportunity to minimize the risk of it occurring, and also opportunity to prepare for it, and reduce its impact.

Whether the spillage is great or small, good preparation will **reduce the impact** of the spill, and most certainly prevent leaks into the stormwater system.

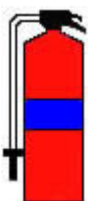
Spill Control Station

Any area where paints and protective coatings are stored and are used should be equipped with a “**Spill Control Station**”. A clearly identifiable and well-equipped area allows a person suddenly faced with a spill to know **where to go** to find **all the tools** necessary to contain and clean up the spill quickly.

The **Spill Control Station** should contain the following items:

- **Protective Wear** such as safety glasses or goggles apron or overalls, solvent-resistant boots, solvent-resistant gloves, hard-hat and a positive air-fed respirator or mask appropriate for the type of paint spill.
- **Clean-up equipment**, which includes a spark-free shovel, dustpan and brush, and a large container of absorbent material, such as sand and clean rags, to absorb the spill. There are many products available for the absorption of liquid spills and are worth investigating. Rags should only be used for minor spills.
- **Waste bins** for the collection and disposal of contaminated absorbent material, used rags and other waste.
- **Hazard signs** to erect around the area to alert people to the spill, clean-up activity and/or slippery floor.
- A simple, easy to follow **printed procedure** for staff to follow.
- **Emergency phone** (or a sign showing the nearest phone) to alert others and, if necessary, your State EPA of the spill.

Nearby there should also be a **fire extinguisher** – foam – denoted by a blue band. It contains nine litres of an aqueous film-forming foam additive, and is to be used in an upright position. It is designed for use on flammable liquid fires such as petrol, oils and paint and has a discharge period of 40 - 90 seconds. This extinguisher must never be used on fires involving live electrical equipment.



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Recognise Possible Spill Risks

Observe!

When visiting an area containing paint, check to see that the containers are in good condition. Some storage areas may contain cans showing signs of corrosion, damage or even pressure build-up (a rounded distortion of the can and/or lid). Ensure that the storage follows all safety guidelines and are stacked neatly and not too high.

Take Care When Handling

When handling or mixing paint, ensure that you are wearing personal safety equipment, and following correct safety procedure, from using the right container opener, to following good occupational health and safety guidelines when lifting and pouring products to ensure that you don't suffer injury and cause a spill.

Use a drop sheet to protect the floor against minor spillage, and if possible, work in a bunded area to contain any larger spills.

Take Care When Using

When applying a coating, ensure that any containers are properly lidded and neatly kept away from the work area. Care must be taken not to kick or step on roller trays on the floor whilst working.

Take Care When Disposing of Left-Overs

Unused mixed material must be poured back into an empty container and allowed to cure in a well-ventilated area out of harm's way until the product solidifies. Only when the mixed material has fully hardened is it ready to be disposed of in normal hard waste collection bins.

For more information, please contact the Dulux Protective Coatings Technical Consultant in your state.

