

# Toolbox Talks 2

## 096: Unsafe Conditions: Spills

### ***Discussion leader duties for this session:***

Review company policies related to the Hazard Communication System and to spill response.

### ***What this Safety Talk covers:***

This Safety Talk addresses conditions that promote spills or improper spill response.

### ***Discussion notes:***

### ***Reducing how much you spill***

You can't focus every second on not spilling whatever substance you're using. So, take some precautions to reduce that possibility and to reduce how much you spill. Take precautions against these conditions:

- Large containers. To prevent large spills, use small containers. If the liquid you're using comes only in large containers, use a smaller, "working" container. This reduces the problems that result from a spill.
- Open containers. Suppose you need some solvent. But the solvent container is a 5 gallon jug. There's no reason to leave that jug open while you're not using it. Reduce fumes and spill amount by keeping it closed.
- Unsecured containers. Sometimes, you need to carry a container of fuel or solvent. Maybe on a lift or in a truck. Strap it down so it won't tip over.
- Unsecured open containers. You may be working with an open container of solvent, paint, or oil. Take care where you set the container, to avoid knocking it over.
- Sample containers. If you're taking transformer oil samples, secure the lid on each container as you go.

### ***Unsafe conditions related to spills***

Some spills have nothing to do with what you're doing. They can happen in your area, though. You may be working in an area where a process leak can occur. Or where someone else may cause a container spill.

- No spill cleanup kit in area. Obtain one or tell the area supervisor.
- Unknown substance is spilled or leaked. Don't clean it up. Report it.
- Huge spill or leak occurs. Leave the area. Report the spill or leak immediately.
- Known toxic or corrosive is spilled. Don't clean it up. Report it.
- A spill occurs, and you smell fumes. Leave the area. Report the spill immediately.
- Someone hastily cleans up a spill and asks you not to say anything. This person is violating the first rule of spill safety. Report the incident immediately. Don't "protect" someone who doesn't care about your safety.

### ***Review and discussion***

1. Which makes more sense: trying to constantly pay attention to any container of liquid you use, or taking steps that reduce the amount that can be spilled?
2. Why should you use small containers of solvents, cleaners, oils, and other substances that might cause a hazard if spilled?
3. If you're filling a small container from a larger one, what should you

4. Why is it important to secure containers of fuel or solvent?
5. What are some common sense things you can do to prevent spills of any liquid you're using?
6. If you're working in an area where a spill or leak is a distinct possibility and there's no spill kit, what should you do?
7. You notice a puddle of an unknown substance. What should you do?
8. You notice a puddle of a known toxin or corrosive. What should you do?
9. You're working and suddenly smell some strong fumes. Should you go investigate and clean up whatever is causing those fumes? Or should you respond in some other way?
10. If someone asks you not to report a spill, what should you do? *[Note to Presenter: Spills happen. What's important is that we deal with them safely and correctly. Every spill, no matter how minor, must be reported. Anyone who deliberately violates this rule and asks you to do the same is an unsafe person. Don't join in the unsafe behavior. Report the spill. Report the person's unsafe behavior, as well. What if this person is an apprentice working under you? In that case, you have some responsibility for this person's training. Discuss the safety issues so this person knows that the reporting requirement is absolute. Then let your foreman know you had this discussion.]*

## This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.