



POLLUTION PREVENTION AT AGRICHEMICAL FACILITIES

This fact sheet identifies steps agrichemical facilities can take to improve the handling and storage of agricultural chemicals and other materials. The focus is on best management practices (BMPs) that reduce waste and pollution at the source through housekeeping, leak/spill prevention and inventory controls.

Using BMPs can help facilities save money, increase efficiency, reduce regulatory costs and protect the environment. BMPs are preferable to treating or controlling releases after they are generated.

General:

- Store products and materials (pesticides, fertilizers, fuels, etc.) in areas that have secondary containment.
- Store products on concrete surfaces to prevent contamination of soil.
- Install gutters on buildings and divert runoff from storage areas.
- Mix and load chemicals on impervious surfaces.
- When washing rigs, bulk tanks, floors, etc., use a high pressure, low volume or steam cleaning system to reduce the amount of wastewater generated.
- Always use the oldest products first and utilize strict inventory controls to prevent materials from becoming outdated.
- Keep the maximum amount of storage containers under roof to prevent stormwater contamination.
- Use water collected in secondary containment structures as mix water or cleaning water to minimize volume of fresh water used and wastewater sent off-site.



Liquid Products:

- Regularly inspect and service all valves and hoses to prevent leakage.
- Place a drip bucket under leaky valves or fittings to prevent spillage and repair leaks as soon as possible.
- Grate or curb the entrance of loading areas to contain any spills.
- Rinse all chemical jugs with high pressure, low volume devices directly into the load where the chemical is being used.
- Use a direct injection system with back-flow protection to ensure that all of the mixture enters the proper load to avoid generating excess tank mix for disposal.
- Use a hose holder on mini-bulk containers to drain any liquid left in the hose back into the container.



Dry Products:

- Keep dry products on pallets to reduce potential for water damage.
- Mix products in a building or with a mixer that is completely enclosed to prevent the generation of dust.
- Use a flexible spout at the end of all augers to prevent fugitive dust and to ensure that all products are loaded in the truck or buggy.
- Use a frame to ensure that all fertilizer coming in reaches the conveyor to prevent spills and product loss.
- Enclose augers and conveyors to prevent dust in loading and unloading areas.



Anhydrous Ammonia:

- Have the loading system equipped with a purge valve and tank to minimize spillage when a hose is uncoupled after filling is complete.
- Inspect and maintain all lines to ensure there are no leaks in the system to minimize releases and odors.



Recycling:

- Investigate opportunities to recycle:
 - Empty containers
 - Seed bags
 - Pallets
 - Scrap metals
 - Oils and lubricants



For more information about the handling and storage of agricultural chemicals, or specific inquiries about BMPs, please contact IEPA's Office of Pollution Prevention.

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