

Red Shed Inc. Chemical Spills Policy

Effective Date: 01/06/2024

Review Date: 01/06/2025

Purpose:

Red Shed Inc. is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for employees, members, contractors, and visitors. This policy establishes the procedures to be followed in the event of a chemical spill, ensuring quick, safe, and effective responses to minimise risks to health, property, and the environment. It complies with relevant **Australian Capital Territory (ACT)** legislation and **Work Health and Safety (WHS) Regulations**.

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, and others who work or are present at Red Shed Inc., especially those who handle or may come into contact with hazardous chemicals. It covers chemical spill prevention, response, clean-up procedures, and disposal requirements.

Policy Statement:

Red Shed Inc. acknowledges that chemical spills can pose serious health and safety risks. Therefore, proper spill response protocols, training, and equipment will be provided to ensure spills are managed safely and effectively. This policy aims to minimise exposure to hazardous substances, prevent environmental contamination, and ensure compliance with all legal obligations.

1. Definitions

- **Chemical Spill:** The unintended release of a hazardous or potentially hazardous chemical, liquid, gas, or powder that may pose a risk to health, safety, or the environment.
- **Minor Spill:** A spill that can be safely managed and cleaned up by trained personnel using appropriate spill kits and protective equipment.
- **Major Spill:** A spill that poses an immediate threat to health, property, or the environment, or that exceeds the capabilities of internal resources, requiring external emergency response assistance.

2. Responsibilities

2.1 Management Responsibilities:

- Ensure that appropriate **spill response training** is provided to all employees who handle chemicals.
- Maintain and regularly inspect **spill response kits** and **personal protective equipment (PPE)**.

- Ensure that Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for all chemicals are accessible and up-to-date, with clear instructions for spill handling and clean-up procedures.
- Conduct regular **risk assessments** to identify potential spill hazards and implement preventive measures.

2.2 Employee Responsibilities:

- Immediately report any chemical spill, regardless of size, to their supervisor or designated emergency contact.
- Follow the proper procedures for spill containment, clean-up, and disposal as outlined in this policy.
- Use appropriate PPE when responding to a spill and avoid taking unnecessary risks.
- Participate in spill response training and adhere to all safety protocols when working with or near hazardous chemicals.

3. Spill Prevention

3.1 Safe Handling of Chemicals:

- All employees handling chemicals must do so in accordance with their **Safety Data Sheets (SDS)** and Red Shed's **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)**.
- Chemicals must be used only for their intended purpose and within safe operating conditions.

3.2 Chemical Storage:

- Chemicals must be stored in **labelled, sealed containers** in appropriate **designated storage areas**.
- Incompatible substances must be stored separately to prevent dangerous reactions.

3.3 Inspection and Maintenance:

- All containers, storage areas, and equipment related to chemical handling must be regularly inspected for signs of wear, leaks, or damage.
- Any damaged containers or equipment must be reported immediately, and corrective actions must be taken to prevent spills.

4. Spill Response Procedures

4.1 General Response Steps for All Spills:

In the event of a chemical spill, the following general steps should be taken immediately:

1. **Alert:** Notify nearby personnel of the spill and, if necessary, evacuate the area to avoid exposure.

2. **Assess:** Determine whether the spill is **minor** or **major** based on the nature of the chemical, the size of the spill, and the associated hazards (refer to SDS for the chemical in question).
 3. **Contain:** Take action to stop the spill from spreading using available materials, such as absorbent pads or barriers.
 4. **Clean-Up:** Follow specific clean-up procedures based on the nature of the spill (see Sections 4.2 and 4.3 below).
 5. **Report:** Document the incident and notify the relevant supervisor or safety officer.
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4.2 Minor Spill Response:

A **minor spill** is one that poses no immediate danger to health or the environment and can be safely managed by trained personnel.

1. **PPE:** Put on appropriate **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**, such as gloves, safety goggles, and masks.
 2. **Containment:** Use absorbent materials from the **spill response kit** (e.g., absorbent pads, booms, or sand) to contain the spill and prevent it from spreading.
 3. **Clean-Up:**
 - Use absorbent materials to clean up the spill.
 - If necessary, neutralize the chemical using the specific neutralizing agents recommended in the chemical's SDS.
 - Place all contaminated materials (rags, pads, etc.) into **chemical waste containers** for proper disposal.
 4. **Ventilation:** Ensure the area is well-ventilated to reduce fumes or vapor concentrations.
 5. **Disposal:** Dispose of all contaminated materials as hazardous waste in accordance with local regulations (see Section 6).
 6. **Report:** Notify the supervisor and document the spill using Red Shed's **Incident Report Form**.
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4.3 Major Spill Response:

A **major spill** involves significant quantities of hazardous chemicals or presents immediate health, safety, or environmental risks.

1. **Evacuation:** Evacuate the area immediately and ensure that all personnel are accounted for. Alert others in the facility to stay clear of the spill area.
2. **Emergency Services:** Call **emergency services (000)** and provide details of the spill, including the type of chemical, quantity, and location.

3. **Containment (if safe):** If possible, and without placing anyone at risk, use available containment materials (spill kits, barriers) to minimize the spread of the spill.
4. **Ventilation (if safe):** Increase ventilation in the area if safe to do so, to disperse any harmful fumes.
5. **Isolate Area:** Block off access to the spill area and await assistance from emergency services or hazardous materials experts.
6. **Report:** Once the situation is under control, complete an **Incident Report** and provide all necessary documentation to management.

5. Spill Kits and Equipment

5.1 Spill Kit Contents:

Red Shed Inc. will maintain **spill response kits** in all areas where hazardous chemicals are stored or used. Each spill kit will include:

- Absorbent materials (pads, booms, sand)
- Neutralizing agents (for acid or base spills)
- PPE (gloves, goggles, masks, aprons)
- Plastic bags and sealable containers for waste disposal
- Emergency contact information

5.2 Spill Kit Inspections:

- Spill kits will be inspected regularly to ensure they are fully stocked and that all materials are in good condition.
- Defective or used materials must be replaced immediately.

6. Chemical Spill Disposal Procedures

6.1 Disposal of Contaminated Materials:

- All materials used in the clean-up of a chemical spill (absorbents, PPE, etc.) must be treated as **hazardous waste**.
- Contaminated materials must be placed in **labelled, sealed containers** for disposal by a licensed hazardous waste disposal contractor.

6.2 Documentation of Disposal:

- Disposal of hazardous waste must be documented, including the type of waste, quantity, and disposal method.

- A **Hazardous Waste Disposal Certificate** must be obtained from the contractor for record-keeping purposes.
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7. Incident Reporting and Investigation

7.1 Incident Reporting:

- All chemical spills, regardless of size, must be reported using Red Shed's **Incident Report Form**.
- The report must include details of the spill, response actions taken, and any health or environmental impacts.

7.2 Incident Investigation:

- All major spills, or incidents where injury or environmental damage occurred, will be investigated by Red Shed's management.
 - Investigations will aim to identify the cause of the spill and recommend corrective actions to prevent future occurrences.
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8. Training and Awareness

8.1 Employee Training:

- All employees handling hazardous chemicals must receive **spill response training**, which will cover:
 - The proper use of spill kits and PPE.
 - Emergency response procedures for minor and major spills.
 - Safe disposal practices for contaminated materials.

8.2 Awareness Programs:

- Regular **awareness programs** will be provided to keep employees informed of the hazards associated with chemical spills and the importance of reporting and responding promptly.
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9. Review and Compliance

9.1 Compliance:

- All employees and contractors must comply with this policy and relevant safety standards when dealing with chemical spills.
- Failure to follow this policy may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment.



9.2 Policy Review:

- This policy will be reviewed annually or after any significant spill incident to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with relevant regulations.
- Recommendations from incident investigations or regulatory changes will be incorporated into future updates of this policy.

This policy has been approved by

Name: John Gasson

Position: President

Date: 01/06/2024

Contact Information:

For questions or concerns regarding first aid at Red Shed, please contact admin@redshed.org.au or 0447 137 111.