

Securing Hazardous Materials Containers Before and After Flooding

Containers and packages of hazardous materials and environmental contaminants can be found on farms, in garages, storage sheds, out buildings and private residences throughout the floodplain. They can become serious hazards especially during floods. Risks can include: release of products that may adversely affect public health or the environment, fire, explosion and mechanical damage from floating containers. To reduce the risk of release of hazardous materials, before and after a flood, follow these procedures – both inside and outside flood-protected areas. These are particularly important if you need to evacuate.

Before a flood:

- Small, portable, hazardous materials containers and packages (paint, cleaners, lube oil, water treatment chemicals, solvents, fuels, pesticides, agricultural chemicals, fertilizers, etc.) should be moved to higher ground and secured so they will not float away. Remember that many household products are a hazard to the public and the environment if they are released into the environment.
- Lids, caps, bungs and spouts, must be tightened so containers will not leak.
- Do not leave them in sheds or out buildings because high water can wash them out and down stream. It's advisable to move them out of the flood prone area.
- Larger portable tanks (45 gallon drums, heating fuel tanks on greenhouses, mobile pesticide sprayers, compressed gas cylinders, etc.) should be disconnected; moved to higher ground; and secured so that they will not float away. Valves must be tightened so the tanks will not leak. Lids, caps and bungs must be secured. It's advisable to move containers out of the flood prone area.
- Anhydrous ammonia nurse wagons and delivery units must be moved out of the flood prone area.
- Pesticide warehouses must be emptied if there is a risk of floodwater reaching them.
- Fertilizer storage buildings must be emptied of packaged and bulk materials if there is a risk of floodwater reaching them.

After a flood:

- Evaluate containers and packages for damage and leaks. Look for dents, torn or disconnected supply lines, broken valves, missing caps, bungs, etc.
- Do not put containers that are to be connected to a delivery system back into service if they have been damaged.
- Anhydrous ammonia nurse wagons and any other regulated transport containers must be inspected and certified following the TDG regulations if they have been damaged or submerged in flood waters.
- Call Manitoba Conservation's **24-hour emergency reporting line, collect, in Winnipeg, at 204-945-4888** to report any loss of product, missing containers or packages; or if hazardous materials containers appear on your property after a flood.

- For more information, contact Manitoba Conservation Dangerous Goods/Emergency Response at 204-945-7025 in Winnipeg.

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