

## **Hazardous Material Incidents**

**Hazardous Material Incidents-** Hazardous materials are substances that are flammable, combustible, explosive, toxic, noxious, corrosive, oxidizable, an irritant, or radioactive.

A hazardous material spill or release can pose a risk to life, health, property, or the environment. An incident can result in the evacuation of a few people, a section of a facility, or an entire neighborhood.

There are a number of Federal laws that regulate hazardous materials, including: the Superfund Amendments and reauthorization Act of 1986 (SARA), the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (RCRA), the Hazardous Materials transportation Act (HMTA), the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA), the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), and the Clean Air Act.

Title III of SARA regulates the packaging, labeling, handling, storage, and transportation of hazardous materials. The law requires facilities to furnish information about the quantities and health effects of materials used at the facility, and to promptly notify local and State officials whenever a significant release of hazardous materials occur.

In addition to on-site hazards, you should be aware of the potential for an off-site incident affecting your operations. You should also be aware of hazardous materials used in facility processes and in the construction of the physical plant.

Detailed definitions as well as lists of hazardous materials can be obtained from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

### **Planning Considerations:**

Consider the following when developing your plan:

- Identify and label all hazardous materials stored, handled, produced, and disposed of by your facility. Follow government regulations that apply to your facility. Obtain material safety data sheets (MSDS) for all hazardous materials at your location.
- Ask the local fire department for assistance in developing appropriate response procedures.
- Train employees to recognize and report hazardous material spills and releases. Train employees in proper handling and storage.
- Establish a hazardous material response plan:

- Establish procedures to notify management and emergency response organizations of an incident.
- Establish procedures to warn employees of an incident.
- Establish evacuation procedures.
- Depending on your operations, organize and train an emergency response team to confine and control hazardous material spills in accordance with applicable regulations.
- Identify other facilities in your area that use hazardous materials. Determine whether an incident could affect your facility.
- Identify highways, railroads, and waterways near your facility used for the transportation of hazardous materials. Determine how a transportation accident near your facility could affect your operations.