



## 4 Perform preventive maintenance

**Preventive maintenance makes sense.**

Accidents happen. Hazardous waste spills, fires and explosions can result in serious injuries, significant property damage and expensive clean-up costs. That's why the Dangerous Waste Regulations (Chapter 173-303 WAC) require that you pay special attention to the way you handle your hazardous wastes.

**You need to make sure your business facility is designed, constructed, maintained and operated in a manner which reduces the possibility of a hazardous waste accident.**

This means taking a fresh look at each of your hazardous waste activities on a regular basis, and saying "What if?" What if, for example, the cover for the spent solvent container is not replaced after adding the last batch of solvent wastes?

- ✓ Could the spent solvent be evaporating into the work area, creating a health concern to employees?
- ✓ What would happen if someone bumped into the open container?

**Do you have the required equipment?**

You can and **must** take steps to reduce the odds of a hazardous waste accident happening at your business.

- Keep the following emergency equipment on hand and accessible to employees, unless you can demonstrate that it is not necessary:
  - ✓ an internal communications or alarm system that signals an emergency for employees;
  - ✓ a phone, hand-held 2-way radio or other device to call local police departments, fire departments or emergency response teams;
  - ✓ portable fire extinguishers and other fire control equipment;
  - ✓ spill control equipment;
  - ✓ equipment cleaning and decontamination after the emergency; and
  - ✓ enough water at an adequate pressure to supply any sprinkler or water spray systems.

**Is there enough aisle space?**

One of the most common reasons for a relatively minor hazardous waste incident turning into a major emergency is that access to and from the area is blocked.

- Maintain enough aisle space throughout your operation so that employees can get out and emergency personnel and equipment can get in.

## Have you made arrangements with local authorities?



## Do you regularly review your preventive maintenance program?

It's important to identify and work with local authorities **before** an accident occurs so that everyone who may be involved in responding to the emergency is prepared.

- Prepare a simple letter for the police, fire departments and emergency response teams with the following information:
  - ✓ layout of your building(s) and property, and places where employees would normally be working;
  - ✓ hazards and characteristics of the dangerous waste(s) you have on the premises; and
  - ✓ entrances and possible evacuation routes.
- Provide local hospitals with a written description of the:
  - ✓ characteristics of dangerous wastes on the premises, and
  - ✓ types of illnesses and injuries that could result from fires, explosions or spills at your business.
- Document any arrangements and keep them on file. If state or local authorities decline to enter into these kinds of arrangements with you, keep a record of this, too.

The last thing you want to do is set up a great preventive maintenance program and then have it fail because your spill kit was empty or the hospital wasn't informed of the hazards of a new waste. Do you review your preventive maintenance program regularly?

- Develop and follow a written schedule for inspecting all:
  - ✓ monitoring equipment,
  - ✓ safety and emergency equipment,
  - ✓ security devices, and
  - ✓ operating and structural equipment.
- Record the following information in an inspection log:
  - ✓ the date and time of the inspection,
  - ✓ name and signature of the inspector,
  - ✓ notes on your observations, and
  - ✓ the date and description of any repairs taken (fix any problems noted on an inspection as soon as possible).
- Conduct a yearly review of the areas where you store ignitable or reactive wastes accompanied by a:
  - ✓ professional person familiar with the Uniform Fire Code, or
  - ✓ local, state or federal fire marshal.
- Test and maintain your emergency equipment regularly to make sure that it works properly in an emergency.
- Review your arrangements with local authorities to keep them up to date.

91-121 Revised May 2003



*Printed on Recycled Paper*  
Using Electronic Originals to  
Conserve Resources

While this Fact Sheet summarizes the preventive maintenance requirements under the Dangerous Waste Regulations, (Chapter 173-303 WAC) it does not replace them. Always refer to the regulations themselves for more detail or call a hazardous waste specialist at your nearest Ecology regional office.

Spokane (509) 329-3400  
Lacey (360) 407-6300  
Bellevue (425) 649-7000  
Yakima (509) 575-2490

This is Checklist Fact Sheet 4 in a series of 10.

If you have special accommodation needs or want more information, please contact the Hazardous Waste and Toxics Reduction Program at (360) 407-6700 (voice), dial 711, or call (800) 833-6388 (TTY).