

Vehicle and Petroleum Maintenance and Storage

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To minimize the risk of water pollution from leaks or spills associated with routine maintenance of, repair, and storage of farm equipment and vehicles, safe collection and proper disposal of petroleum products and other potential pollutants such as degreasing fluids and cleaning solvents, certain management practices must be implemented. A plan should be in place for all agricultural operations where equipment or vehicles are repaired, maintained and stored. Implementation of certain practices can minimize the chance of spills, allow for cleanup in the event of a spill or leak and minimize the amount of chemicals used and waste generated.

When planning, be sure to maintain vehicles and equipment so leaks can be contained and cleaned. Conduct an inventory of vehicle and equipment maintenance and repair activities on the farm. If work is being done on more than one truck or tractor, it should be in a workshop to minimize the damaging effects of spills and leaks. Consider substituting water based cleaners and detergents for solvents and caustic solutions. **Additional considerations are:**

- Do not purchase more chemicals than will be used in one year.
- Store petroleum products, other vehicle maintenance chemical, and wastes in clearly labeled, covered containers, with any safety instructions prominently displayed.
- Always have absorbents and containers available to clean up spills. Use drip pans when changing fluids.
- Provide adequate fire control for combustible fluids present in the workshop.
- Have emergency phone numbers for fire, ambulance, poison control and oil or chemical spill response unit readily available.
- Store wastes in separate containers, if possible in original container with the product name.
- Never pour waste oil or hazardous wastes on the ground or down the drain. Never apply waste oil to driveways or access roads for dust or weed control.
- Properly dispose of unused equipment.
- Prevent cross connections. Never let water hoses go into containers holding other fluids. Install backflow preventers.

Petroleum Storage

A "storage tank" is a system of interconnected tanks, pipes, pumps, vaults, fixed containers, monitoring devices and appurtenant structures, singly or in combination, which are used or designed to be used for storage, transmission or dispensing of oil or petroleum liquids. Best management practices should be implemented in order to allow for the storage of petroleum products which minimize the chance for a leak or spill to groundwater as well as to minimize the risk of fire and other threats to human safety.

Underground tanks are a significant problem because when a leak occurs it can go undetected for a long period of time. Underground tanks should be replaced before they leak and unused tanks should be removed or properly filled according to state law.

When determining whether the farm is in compliance with all requirements of state law for petroleum storage, consider the following:

- Do existing storage tanks need to be replaced?
- What types and quantities of petroleum are used?
- Eliminating gasoline storage on the farm
- Is above ground storage a feasible option?
- Steel versus fiberglass?

If the petroleum storage is in an aquifer protection area, be certain it will comply with all requirements under state law for that area.