

Environmental Loss Control

Handling Liquids

May 2026

Best Practice Tips for Materials Handling

- Use CSA/ULC approved containers (including jerry cans and fireproof cabinets) for proper identification and handling of flammable substances. Corrosives should be kept separately.
- Employees should refrain from running, especially when carrying environmentally sensitive substances. All substances should be in closed containers.
- Employees should be trained on the issues spills can cause as well as safe handling procedures. Including having Material Safety Data Sheets available for reference.
- Training programs should include annual updates, periodic refreshers, and should be tailored to any unique features or operational logistics of the site.
- Materials dirty with oils or other sensitive substances should have proper storage to contain residue. Storage containers should be labelled and accessible.
- To reduce spills when dispensing from pails, use funnels/nozzles or lids with spouts to pour liquids.
- When dispensing from drums, use positive displacement handpumps or self-closing faucets. Such devices are available from common supply stores.
- To move large containers like drums, totes, or entire skid-loads, equipment like forklifts may be necessary. Employees operating such equipment need to be trained and certified. Operating at a slower steady speed, keeping loads low, and the use of straps to stabilize loads, can decrease the chances of dropping, tipping, or spilling substances.
- Similar precautions are needed when using cranes, hoists or winches.
- Spill kits should be in the proximity of sensitive substances and employees should be trained on how to use the kit.
- Any and all spills, regardless of quantity, should be recorded and reported to management.

