



ENVIRONMENTAL EMERGENCY REGULATIONS, 2019

Public Notifications

The *Environmental Emergency Regulations, 2019* require that facilities using or storing regulated substances communicate with members of the public who may be affected by an environmental emergency. This includes communicating before an incident to create awareness of the potential effects to human health and the environment, providing notification of an emergency, as well as giving updates during and after the emergency. Members of the public could include but are not limited to community associations, public safety authorities (i.e., firefighters and police) and local residents.

Who should be notified?

Facilities must notify all members of the public within the area that could be impacted by an environmental emergency. This area is identified by predicting the greatest impact distance beyond the facility boundary, of a potential substance release, such as an ammonia leak or an oil spill. The facility should identify a release scenario that which is more likely to happen than a worst-case scenario.

How should you communicate with the public?

The Regulations do not specify how to communicate with the public because each facility and community is different. Some examples include public meetings/information sessions, flyers, posters, stickers, DVDs, website, newsletters, open house meetings, safety day, information booths at events, door-to-door direct contact, partnering with a local Community Awareness and Emergency Response group, or involving the public in exercises/drills.

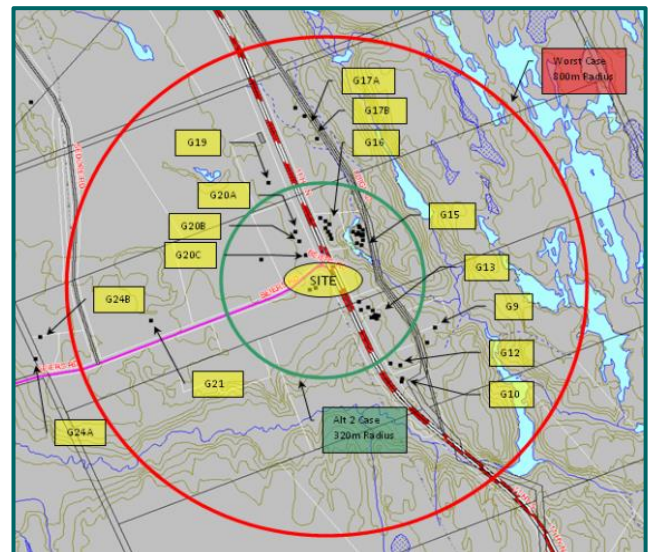


Figure 1: Impact distance model demonstrating potentially impacted members of the public. The site is located in the center and the red circle is the greatest impact distance from a potential release.

Notification Requirements: Before an Environmental Emergency

As a proactive measure, the following information must be shared with members of the public:

- the possibility of an environmental emergency;
- the potential effects on the environment and human health, taking into consideration the hazardous substance, quantity, process at facility and geographic location;
- the measures that would be taken to protect the environment and human health; and
- the means by which the facility would communicate with members of the public during an environmental emergency.

Notification Requirements: During and After an Environmental Emergency

If an environmental emergency happens, the public should be notified as soon as possible using a suitable method (i.e. siren, automated phone message, media release, police/fire services, etc.). The public should also be updated regularly.

The following information must be shared with members of the public:

- A description of the measures taken by the facility and local authorities during an environmental emergency
- Information and guidance concerning the actions taken by the facility or local authority to reduce potential harm to the environment and danger to human health
- An explanation of how the actions taken by the facility or local authority may help reduce harm or danger

After an environmental emergency, the public should be informed in a timely manner that the event is over. If warranted, the Environmental Emergency Plan, commonly referred to as the E2 Plan, should be revised to incorporate changes that have been implemented to prevent a recurrence of the incident.

Could these notifications compromise a facility's security?

Public notifications identify the potential health effects of the substances on-site but do not disclose the location or quantities of the regulated substances. The notification obligations are designed to provide the public with the information and resources they need to prepare for a potential environmental emergency to protect their health and safety.

Disclosure: this material has been prepared for convenience of reference and accessibility and does not have an official character. It is of a general nature only. For all purposes of interpreting and applying the Regulations, users must consult the official version of the Environmental Emergency Regulations, 2019 and seek their own legal advice as appropriate.

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