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Photo Credit: Beth Ferry

Manure Management for Fairs and Exhibitions- Emergency Spill Response

A guide to planning for manure spill response at fairs and expos.

#4 in a series of four fact sheets for fairs and expos

Emergency spill response planning

Although solid manure is not commonly involved in large spills, you should have an emergency spill response plan in place that considers human safety as well as environmental safety. Additionally, the biohazards of a manure spill, such as disease potential, is also important to consider in a response plan.

Prevention is the most important way to avoid a possible manure spill. Practice prevention techniques at these areas where manure spills are most likely to occur:

- Loading area: Keep the loading areas around storages and stalls as clean as possible.
- Local transport: Fill wheelbarrows and skid loaders only up to capacity where they will not be losing manure as they travel to the storage area. Any dropped manure should be immediately picked up and put in the storage.
- Long distance hauling: Only fill spreaders to their potential (what the specs from the manure spreader manufacturer state they can hold) and do not overload; inspect equipment before using to make sure everything is in proper working order.
- Field spreading/land application: Overapplication of manure to a field can turn into an emergency response situation, especially if a large rain or snowmelt event occurs shortly after application.
- Have spill kits available in nearby barns, so they are convenient and people know where they are.

To contact an expert in your area, visit msue.anr.msu.edu/experts or call 888-MSUE4MI (888-678-3464)

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A spill kit should contain the following:

- Personal protective equipment (PPE): chemical-resistant gloves, boots, protective suit, safety glasses
- Absorbent material, such as absorbent clay, sawdust, pet litter, activated charcoal, vermiculite, paper or spill pillows to soak up liquid spills
- Fire extinguisher rated for all types of fires
- Other spill cleanup items specified on the labels of products used regularly
- Emergency telephone numbers
- Non-sparking shovel (for fuel spills), broom and dustpan
- Closeable, sturdy plastic container labeled "Spill Kit"
- Sweeping compound for dry spills and heavy-duty detergent for liquid spills (Properly dispose any collected materials.)
- Also consider a first-aid kit and a change of clothes in the event clothing becomes contaminated.
(Emergency Planning for the Farm E-2575 • October 2014)

Should a spill occur, follow these spill response steps:

1. Put human safety first. This is always the number one priority. Make sure that everyone involved in the situation is safe and has received medical attention if needed.
2. Control the spill at the source.
3. Contain the spill. Keep the manure in one area if possible and prevent it from flowing into nearby surface waters. Consider damming up an area using dirt or utilizing straw or hay bales as a buffer to absorb manure.
4. Contact the appropriate authorities. In Michigan, contact the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD, 24-hour hotline): 800-405-0101 and/or the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE, hotline): 800-292-4706.
5. Clean up the spill. Authorities may give guidance for clean-up procedures. Please follow their guidance.
6. Document the spill. This serves to protect you as it is proof that you made a concerted effort to minimize any associated environmental risk.

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