Vehicle Fluid Spill Mitigation

Guidelines for the
Mitigation of Accidental Discharge
of Motor Vehicle Fluids
(Non-Cargo)

Presented by Arland T. (Ted) Smith

For the Traffic Incident Management Teams
December, 2008
What is a *non-cargo* vehicle fluid?

- How many can you identify?

- Ever been frustrated with the conflicting interpretations of proper action and the resulting long delays?
Motor Vehicle Fluids

• Most common and problematic non-cargo fluid spill?

• Ruptured or leaking saddle tanks

  • Jack knife
  • Roll over
  • TT vs fixed object
  • Truck vs car
Common Sense Handling of Fluid Spills at Traffic Incidents

- Confusion and hesitation limit containment, spill spreads across lanes and then to the roadside environment

- Previous practice of in-action by early responders hinders Quick Clearance and damages road surface

- “I don’t want to be held liable for any clean-up cost”

- “If I don’t touch it I won’t be responsible for it”

- Too many five hour plus roadway closures

Key words non-cargo
The Guidelines:
Clearly state that spilled motor vehicle fluids are NOT HAZMAT incidents

- Meet FL regulatory requirements
- Were jointly developed
- Reduces closure time and congestion
- Limit secondary crashes
- Reduce incident responders’ exposure to traffic
The Guidelines state:

Who can take action:

- On-scene responders
  Who are they?
- How about the Driver of vehicle?

What can be used:

- Oil dry
- Sand
- Kitty litter
- Peat moss
- Pads and pillow
- Dry Portland cement

Use dirt if needed!
In the Guidelines, Incident Responders are:

- Encouraged to act in the “Interest of Safety” limit spill area
- Told that by taking action they accept no liability for spilling additional fluids or disposal cost of any clean-up material
- Urged to open travel lanes in a crucial manner (Responsible Party remains liable)
Florida’s Vehicle fluid spills

Emergency Response Institute 2008
Quick Action Guide

- Stop leaking material at the source
- Contain and limit spill from spreading
- Apply available absorbents
- Sweep material off travel lanes
- Second application if necessary
- Identify spill as a vehicle fluid
- Gradually restore traffic flow
- ID RP and mark location of material
- Assure proper notification made

*Presented by Arland T. (Ted) Smith*