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OIL HANDLING FACILITIES STANDARDS

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Canada 

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INTRODUCTION

The *Canada Shipping Act (CSA)*, as amended by *Chapter 36, Statutes of Canada 1993*, outlines Canada's new marine oil spill preparedness and response regime. The private sector regime seeks to ensure that Canada is better prepared to respond to ship-source oil pollution incidents. The regime recognizes that the majority of spills occur during the loading and unloading of oil from ships and tankers. *Chapter 36* stipulates that operators of designated oil handling facilities must have an arrangement with a certified response organization and an on-site oil pollution emergency plan.

The standards for oil handling facilities were developed in consultation with interested parties representing oil handling facilities, the petroleum and shipping industries, environmental groups, provincial governments, and Canadian Coast Guard and Environment Canada.

The *Canada Shipping Act* defines standards as including "specifications and technical and operational requirements." Pursuant to section 660.6 (CSA), the Minister may issue standards for oil handling facilities. The standards provide details for operators of designated oil handling facilities in developing their oil pollution emergency plans to ensure that plans will comply with the requirements for procedures, equipment and resources as set out in the legislation (s.s. 660.2(4)) and in the regulations for Response Organizations and Oil Handling Facilities (made pursuant to s.s. 660.9(1)(b)).

The standards are intended to be used in the planning process in preparation for a response to an oil pollution incident. Each oil pollution emergency plan will be unique, taking into account the geographic features specific to the facility. Since the response to an incident will be influenced by environmental and other factors, the standards should not be used as a yardstick against which to measure the appropriateness of the response. Finally, while *Chapter 36* focuses on preparedness and response in the event of an incident, it is incumbent upon users of marine resources to prevent the spill in the first place.

OIL HANDLING FACILITIES STANDARDS

Levels of Facilities

1. For the purpose of section 2, oil handling facilities are categorized according to their maximum oil transfer rate in cubic metres per hour, in respect of each single oil product loaded or unloaded to or from a ship, as follows:

Category of Oil Handling Facility	Maximum Oil Transfer Rate
Level 1	150 m ³ /h
Level 2	750 m ³ /h
Level 3	2 000 m ³ /h
Level 4	More than 2 000 m ³ /h

Spill Sizes

2. The following is the minimum size of an oil pollution incident in respect of each single oil product loaded or unloaded to or from a ship, for which a response needs to be described in the oil pollution emergency plan:

Category of Oil Handling Facility	Minimum Spill Size
Level 1	1 m ³
Level 2	5 m ³
Level 3	15 m ³
Level 4	50 m ³

Oil Pollution Emergency Plans: Factors to Be Considered in Scenarios

3. An oil handling facility, in developing oil pollution scenarios, shall take into account the following factors:
 - (a) the nature of the oil product in respect of which the scenario is developed;
 - (b) the types of ships that are loaded or unloaded at the facility;
 - (c) the tides and currents that prevail at the facility;
 - (d) the meteorological conditions that prevail at the facility;

- (e) the surrounding areas of environmental sensitivities that would likely be affected by an oil spill;
- (f) the measures that will be implemented to minimize an oil pollution incident; and
- (g) the time within which an effective response to an oil pollution incident can be carried out.

Priorities

4. The following priorities shall be taken into account for the purpose of establishing the order of measures to be taken during a response to an oil pollution incident:
- (a) the safety of the facility's personnel;
 - (b) the safety of the facility;
 - (c) the safety of the communities living adjacent to the facility;
 - (d) the prevention of fire and explosion;
 - (e) the minimization of the oil pollution incident;
 - (f) the notification and reporting of the oil pollution incident;
 - (g) the environmental impact of the oil pollution incident; and
 - (h) the requirements for cleaning up the oil pollution incident.