

What you need to know about...

Secondary Containment Requirements for Drycleaning Facilities

Section 376.3078(9)(a) and (b), Florida Statutes, requires owners or operators of drycleaning facilities to provide secondary containment of drycleaning solvents. Below are the answers to several questions about the secondary containment requirements:

1. What is secondary containment?

The purpose of secondary containment is to prevent releases of drycleaning solvents to the environment and reduce contamination of soils and groundwater. The secondary containment requirements provide for temporary containment of accidental spills or leaks until appropriate response actions are taken by the owner/operator to abate the source of the spill and remove the product from all areas on which the product has accumulated.

2. When is secondary containment required to be in place and what type of containment is required?

The deadlines to install secondary containment and the type of containment both depend on when the facility commenced operations:

Facilities that begin operation on or after January 1, 1996, must be equipped with secondary containment when the business begins operation. Secondary containment for these facilities must consist of rigid and impermeable containment vessels installed beneath each machine or item of equipment which drycleaning solvents are used.

Facilities that began operations prior to January 1, 1996, must be equipped with secondary containment by January 1, 1997. Secondary containment for these facilities must consist of rigid and impermeable containment vessels, or a dike around each machine or item of equipment which drycleaning solvents are used.

All facilities, regardless of when operation began, must install secondary containment around any solvent or waste solvent storage area by January 1, 1997. The secondary containment for storage areas must be either a rigid and impermeable vessel, or a surrounding dike.

The rigid and impermeable vessels shall be constructed of metal or other material that cannot be permeated by drycleaning solvents, according to manufacturer product use and limitation recommendations. All diked containment areas must be sealed or otherwise made impervious to drycleaning solvents, including floor surfaces, floor drains, floor joints and inner dike walls. Concrete or asphalt floor surfaces are not impervious to drycleaning solvents. For information about acceptable sealants for diked surfaces, please see question #4 below. The department recommends the installation of containment vessels rather than the installation of dikes, because containment vessels offer greater security from releases.

3. How much secondary containment capacity do I need?

All machines and equipment that have a tank capacity of greater than one quart and all areas in which solvents or wastes that contain solvents are stored, must have secondary containment. Containment structures must be able to contain at least 110% of the capacity of each such machine or item of equipment and each storage area. The capacity of a machine or equipment is the capacity of the largest single tank in the machine or equipment. The capacity of a solvent or waste storage area is the volume of the largest storage container.

Floor surfaces should be sealed underneath and at least two feet around all machines or equipment that have a tank capacity of one quart or less and are not within a secondary containment structure.

Containment vessels and equipment must be mounted in such a way as not to compromise the integrity of the containment vessel. Outdoor storage areas must be roofed or otherwise protected from the accumulation of rainfall.

4. What types of floor sealants are acceptable?

In order to maintain a secondary containment dike that is impervious to drycleaning solvents, all floor surfaces, floor drains and floor joints within the diked area must be sealed with a solvent-resistant sealer and/or caulking compound (sealant). The Department does not recommend any specific floor sealers or sealants. However, the sealer and sealant must be compatible with and resistant to all solvents used at the facility for a contact period of at least 72 hours, according to manufacturer product use and limitation recommendations. The sealant must be applied and maintained in accordance with manufacturer specifications. Sealant specifications and a record of application dates must be maintained at the facility.

5. What is required if a spill occurs outside of a containment area?

Upon discovery of any spill outside of a containment area, the owner or operator of any drycleaning facility or wholesale supply facility must immediately:

1. Initiate and complete actions to abate the source of the spill, remove the discharged solvents from all indoor and outdoor surfaces, remove all discharged solvents and dissolved solvents from any septic tank or catch basin in which the solvent has accumulated, remove affected soils; and,
2. Report the spill or discharge to the State Warning Point, by calling (800) 320-0519.

Drycleaning Solvent Cleanup Program
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