



National  
Operational  
Guidance

## Control measure

**Access to specialist advice**



**NFCC**  
National Fire  
Chiefs Council

Developed and maintained by the NFCC

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### Control measure knowledge

Seek specialist advice at any incident that could pollute the environment. This could be a hazardous materials adviser or third party expert.

See:

- National Operational Guidance: Incident Command - [Situational Awareness](#)
- National Operational Guidance: Operations - [Reduce exposure](#)
- Delegating environmental protection HEMPAs

### Strategic actions

Fire and rescue services should:

- Ensure that fire and rescue service managers who are likely to be in command of an incident involving hazardous materials and/or environmental risk, or are likely to perform the specialist advisory role of hazardous materials advisor (HMA), receive specialist environmental training. This training should place emphasis on larger-scale incidents where there is significant environmental risk
- Consider mobilising or involving a Hazardous Materials Advisor (HMA) for any incident with the potential to pollute the environment, not only those incidents involving hazardous materials. See section 3.3, [Environmental Protection Handbook](#)
- Identify triggers where the local environment agency should be informed or where advice should be requested
- Secure access to more detailed advice from scientific advisers or from the CHEMSAFE service provided by the National Chemical Emergency Centre (NCEC)

### Tactical actions

Incident commanders should:



- Ensure that all appropriate environmental agencies are informed of the incident when required
- Consider the appointment of a HMA (or equivalent) to oversee environmental protection activities
- Consider seeking specialist advice from a HMA on remedial action for spillages and fire water run off
- Request advice from appropriate environmental protection agencies
- Consider specialist advice from:
  - Chemical suppliers whose products are held at the incident site
  - Contracted specialist advice
  - Chemsafe
  - National Chemical Emergency Centre (NCEC)
- Notify the environmental agency if a HVP or large volumes of water are being extracted and used
- Request appropriate environmental protection (EP) resources (e.g. hazmat adviser, EP equipment, pumps)