

Spills in the Northwest Territories 2008



Produced by: NWT Centre for Geomatics

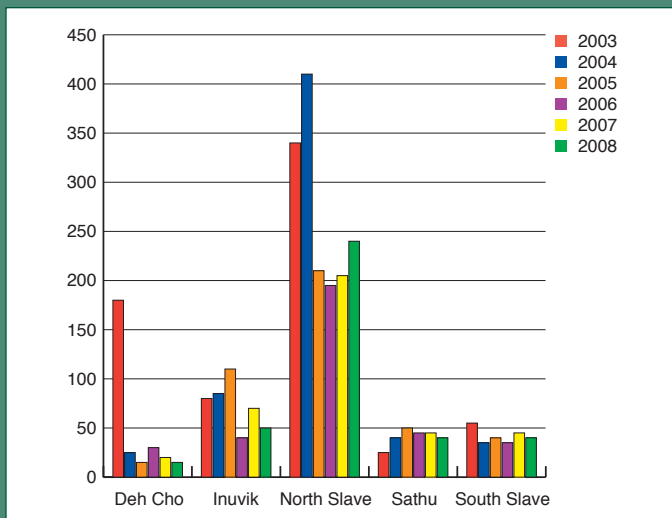
The Department of Environment and Natural Resources maintains a database of hazardous material spills reported in the Northwest Territories (NWT) since 1971. This report briefly summarizes the data collected for spills reported in 2008.

- 371 spills were reported in 2008, 11 less than 2007.
- Half (50%) of reported spills were fewer than 100 litres.
- 62% of the spills reported were in the North Slave Region.
- The mining sector was responsible for 35% of the reported spills.
- Over one-third of the spills reported involved fuel oil.
- 14.8 million litres of wastewater was spilled.

Where did the spills occur?

Of the 371 spills reported in 2008, 62% occurred in the North Slave Region. Inuvik followed with 13%, South Slave with 11%, Sahtu with 9% and Deh Cho with 5%. Most of the regions reported less spills in 2008, with the exception of the North Slave, which actually saw an increase. Over half of the spills (53%) in the North Slave Region occurred at mine sites or were directly related to the mining sector. Government followed with 15% of the spills and private individuals with 14%. Figure 1 below shows the number of reported spills by region between 2003 and 2008.

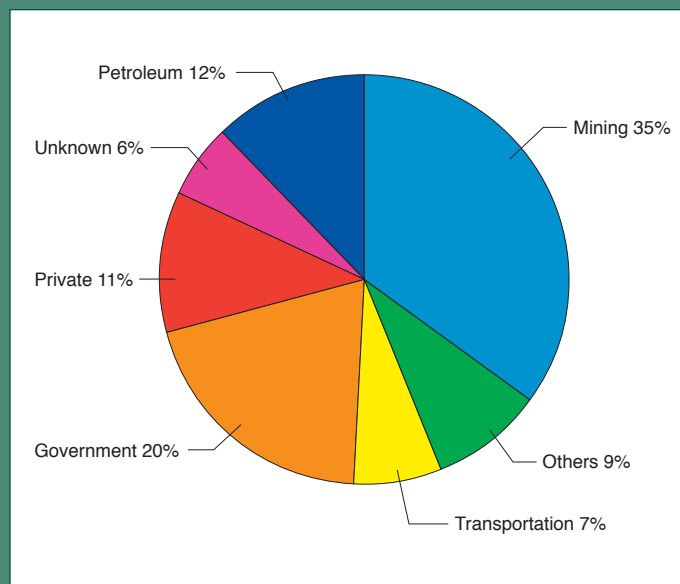
Figure 1 – Number of Reported Spills by Region



Who was responsible?

Like 2007, 35% of the spills were reported by the mining sector, most of them occurring in the North Slave Region. Government (including all federal, territorial and municipal governments and crown corporations) followed with 20% of all reported spills. All sectors either remained the same or saw a decrease from a year earlier, with the exception of private individuals up 2% and government up 1%. Since 2005, the petroleum sector has gone down from 24% of the reported spills to 12% in 2008.

Figure 2 – Reported Spills by Sector



Spills in the Northwest Territories 2008

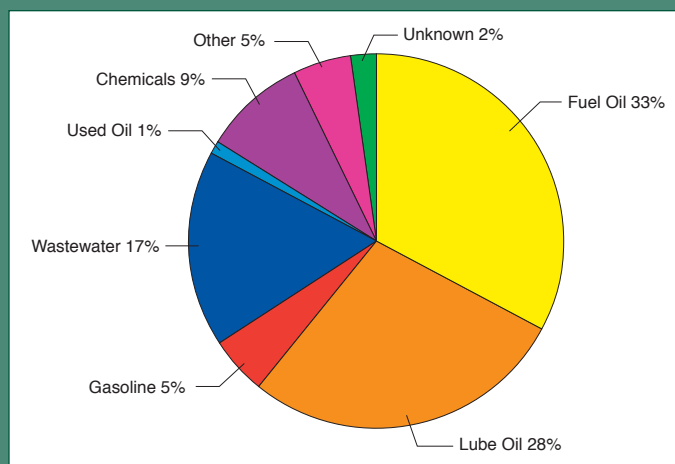
What was spilled?

Fuel oil, which includes diesel and heating fuel, accounted for 33% of the spills reported. This is up 3% from 2007, but the volume was less than the five-year average.

Lubricating oil spills increased 3% from the previous year. Most of these reports involved blown hydraulic lines or leaks from heavy equipment and haul trucks and smaller industrial vehicles such as pick-ups leaking engine and transmission fluids.

Wastewater, including sewage, produced water (salty wastewater brought to the surface during oil and gas extraction), mine tailings, fine processed kimberlite from diamond mines and fresh water was responsible for 17% of reported spills. Although the number of wastewater spills increased by only 1%, the volume reportedly spilled was substantially greater, almost 8 times the 5-year average due to a few large (>1,000,000 litre) spills, mostly in the North Slave Region and associated with mining. There was also one 2.1 million litre sewage spill in the Inuvik Region.

Figure 3 – Number of Spills by Product



How much was spilled?

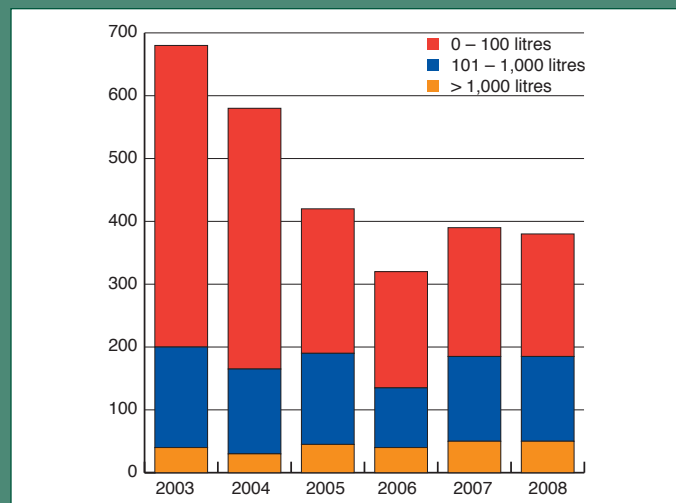
Table 1 – Volume Spilled (Litres)

	2008	5-year Average (2003-2007)
Wastewater	14,878,319	1,869,038
Lube Oil	58,333	25,770
Fuel Oil	51,354	88,081
Other (crude oil, drill mud)	15,181	43,844
Chemicals	8,750	21,498
Gasoline	1,562	5,587
Unknown	800	124
Used Oil	65	661
Natural Gas ^{1,2}	0 m ³	5,051 m ³

¹ Released to air and reported in cubic metres (m³). May contain hydrogen sulphide.

² "Natural Gas" is separated from "Others" to show volume.

Figure 4 – Number of Spills and Size



Half (50%) of the spills reported were less than 100 litres.

For further information on spills, contact:

Environment Division
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Government of the Northwest Territories
P.O. Box 1320
Yellowknife NT X1A 2L9
Telephone: (867) 873-7654
Facsimile: (867) 873-0221
Web site:
http://www.enr.gov.nt.ca/_live/pages/wpPages/Home.aspx

To report a spill, call the

24-hour Spill Report Line
(867) 920-8130

(Collect calls accepted.)