

# Spills in the Northwest Territories 2015



The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) 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 2015.

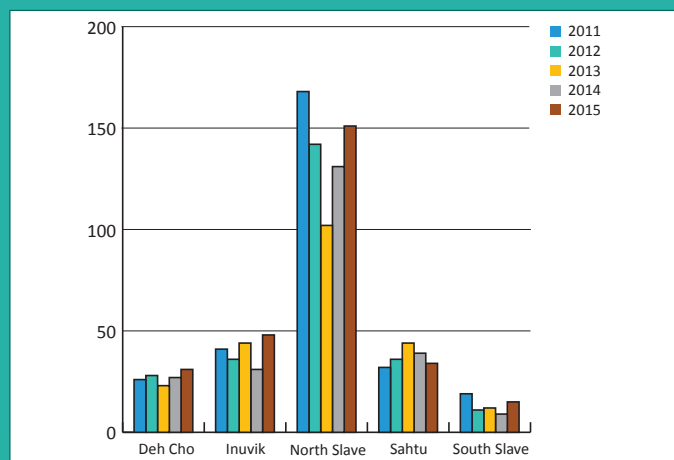
- 279 spills were reported in 2015, 42 more than 2014.
- 57% of the reported spills were small, less than 100 litres.
- 54% of the spills reported were in the North Slave Region.
- Mining spills reported have increased by 14% from 2014.
- 35% of all spills reported involved fuel oil.
- 1,035,625 litres of wastewater was spilled, which is 541,452 litres less than the five-year average.

## Where did the spills occur?

In 2015, 279 spills were reported to the 24-hour Spill Report Line in the NWT. Just over half (57%) of the reported spills occurred in the North Slave Region. Inuvik (16%), Sahtu (11%), Deh Cho (11%) and South Slave (5%).

Mining industry spills (42%) have shown an overall increase from 2014. This is attributed to construction activities at new and existing mine sites. There was a decrease in spills from government – municipal/territorial/federal (17%) and petroleum companies (5%). Spills from private individuals (10%), transportation companies (3%), unknown parties (10%) and others (13%) have remained unchanged.

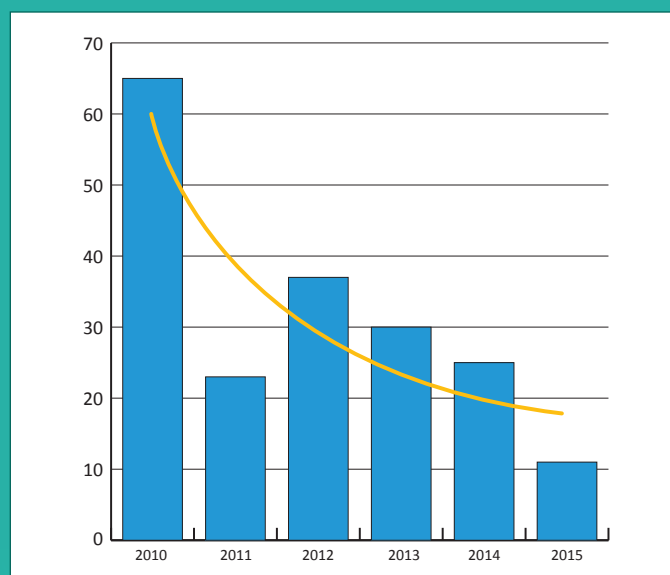
Figure 1 – Number of Reported Spills by Region



## Residential oil tank spills

Since the release of the Homeowner's Guide to Oil Tanks in 2010 there continues to be an overall decreasing trend in the number of spills reported in the NWT from residential-size steel oil tanks (1,135 litres) due to corrosion. It is believed the guide has assisted in reducing these spills.

Figure 2 – Number of Spills by Residential Oil Tanks



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## What was spilled?

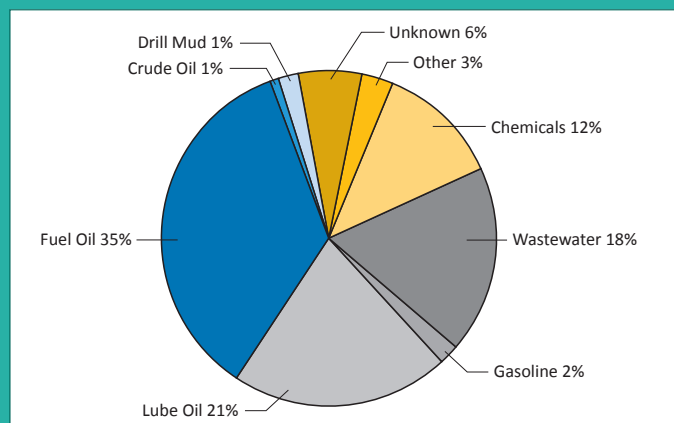
Fuel oil, which includes diesel and heating fuel, accounted for 35% of the spills reported in 2015. This is a decrease of 4% from 2014. Additionally, there was a corresponding decrease in volume of litres spilled in 2015 (40,417).

There was a 2% decrease in chemical spills reported from the previous year. The volume of chemical spills has shown a decrease of 61,664 litres when compared to the previous five-year average. Most of these reports involve industrial sites and transportation companies that utilize or move large volumes of chemicals throughout the NWT.

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 18% of reported spills. In 2015, there were four more wastewater spills and the volume reported increased by 623,718 litres from 2014.

Figure 3 below shows the number of spills reported by product categories.

**Figure 3 – Number of Spills by Product**



## How much was spilled?

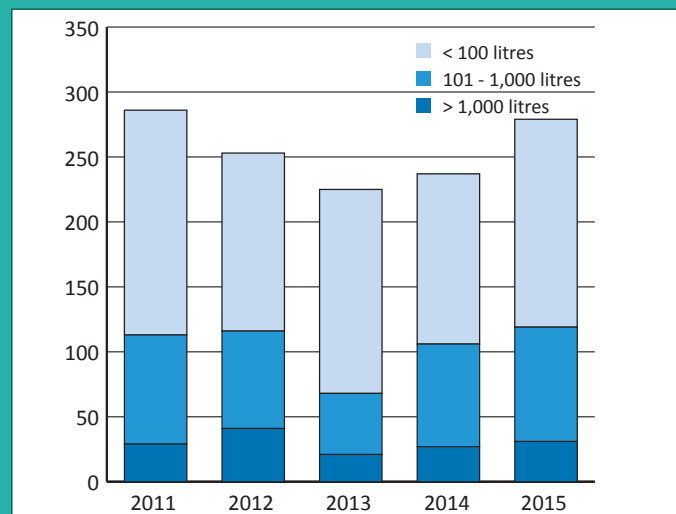
Five of the nine product volumes spilled were less than the five-year average.

**Table 1 – Volume Spilled (Litres)**

	2015	5-year Average (2010-2014)
Wastewater	1,035,625	1,577,077
Other	700,268	21,921
Fuel Oil	45,224	45,130
Crude Oil <sup>1</sup>	12,857	21,472
Drill Mud	11,785	30,723
Chemicals	10,252	71,916
Lube Oil	8,114	5,349
Unknown	934	40
Gasoline	22	14,017

<sup>1</sup> "Crude Oil" is separated from "Others" to show volume.

**Figure 4 – Number of Spills and Size**



57% of all spills in 2015 were less than 100 litres.

## For more 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) 767-9236 Ext. 53176

To report a spill, call the  
**24-hour Spill Report Line**  
**(867) 920-8130**  
 (Collect calls accepted.)