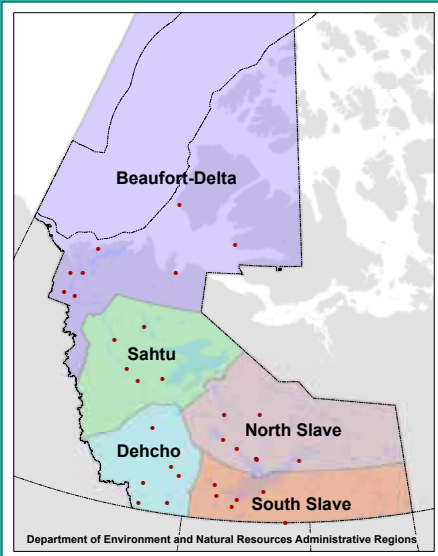


2018 Northwest Territories Spills Report



Produced by: NWT Centre for Geomatics

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) has maintained a database of all hazardous material spills reported in the Northwest Territories (NWT) since 1971. This report briefly summarizes the data collected for spills reported in 2018.

- 179 spills were reported in 2018, 20 less than 2017 (10% decrease).
- 49% of the reported spills were less than 100 litres or 100 kilograms.
- 50% of spills reported occurred in the North Slave region.
- Spills at mining operations increased by six and spills at government operations increased by two since 2017.
- 35% of spills reported in 2018 involved fuel oil.
- The number of spills from home oil tanks has decreased by 509% since 2010, when ENR released the Homeowners' Guide to Oil Tanks.

Where did the spills occur?

In 2018, 179 spills were reported to the 24-Hour Spill Report Line in the NWT. Of those, 57% occurred in the North Slave region. Figure 1 shows the number of reported spills by region from 2014 to 2018.

Spills reported at construction sites (7%), mining operations (12%), petroleum operations (8%), transportation companies (11%), and government operations (municipal, territorial, and federal) (45%), increased in 2018. Spills attributed to others (4%), unknown parties (2%), and private individuals (10%) decreased in 2018.

Figure 2 below shows the number of spills by volume since 1990. Of the spills reported in 2018, 49% were less than 100 litres.

Figure 1 – Number of spills by region

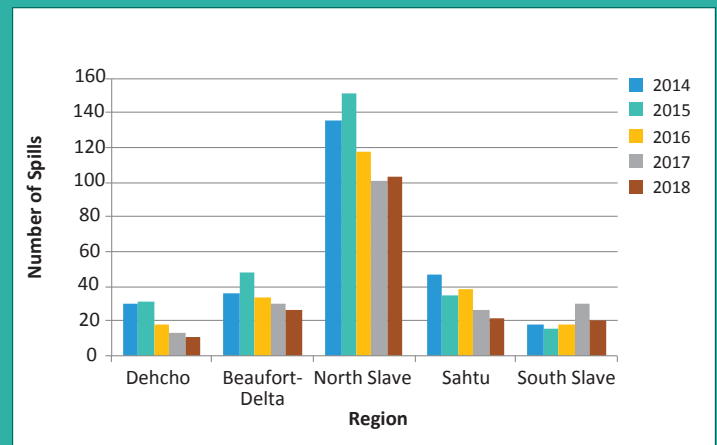
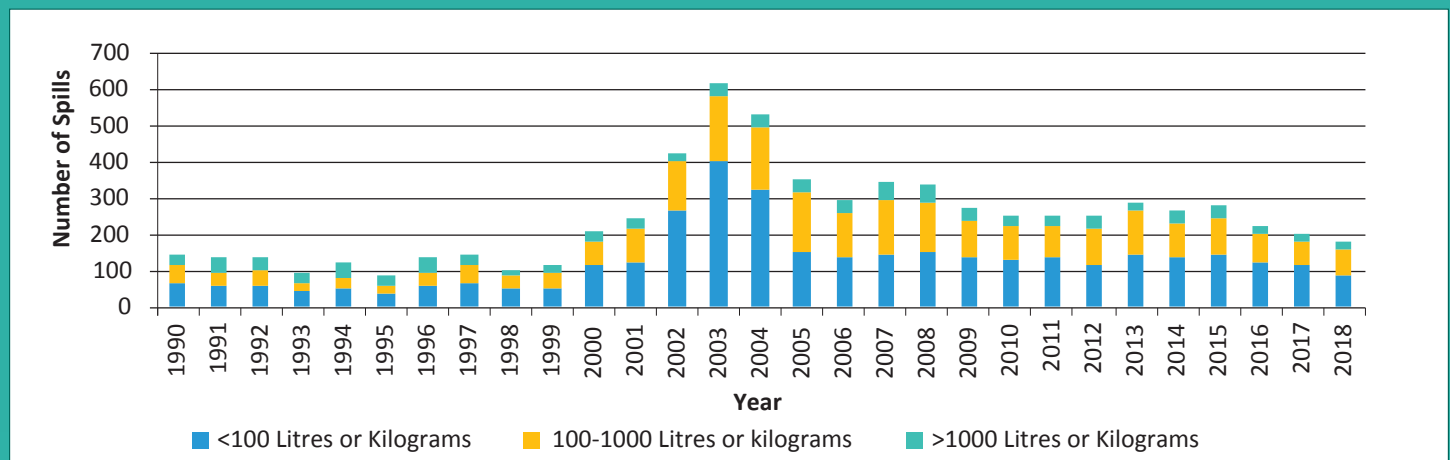


Figure 2 – Number of spills by year



2018 Northwest Territories Spills Report



What and how much was spilled?

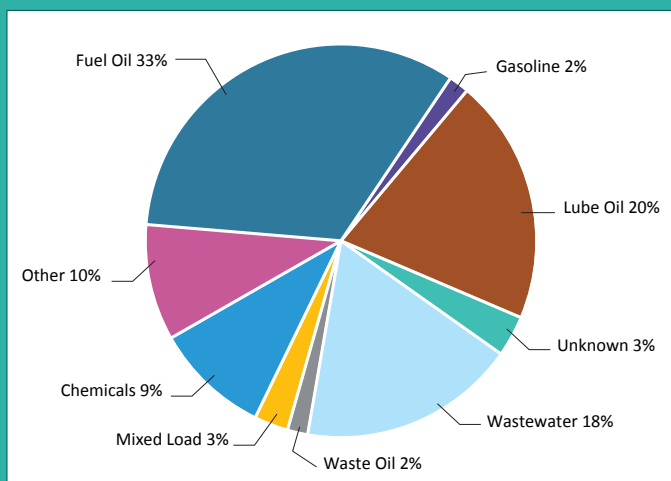
Wastewater, which includes sewage, mine tailings and other types of contaminated water, accounted for 18% of reported spills. In 2018, there were 12 fewer wastewater spills than 2017, but the total volume reported increased by 619,529 litres. Wastewater spills can be very large due to pressurized water systems and high flow rates. The largest spill in 2018 was a sewage spill of approximately 2,000,000 litres, which occurred in the Kam Lake area of Yellowknife.

Chemical spills increased by 31%, with four more spills reported in 2018 than 2017. The total amount spilled increased by 15,291 litres. This increase is attributed to several large spills (greater than 1,000 litres) involving ammonium nitrate, glycol and liquid flocculent.

Fuel oil, which includes diesel and heating fuel, accounted for 33% of the spills reported in 2018. This represents a decrease of 18% compared to 2017. The volume of fuel oil spilled also decreased by 21,072 litres compared to 2017.

There were only three waste oil spills in 2018, which is the same number as 2017. However, there was an increase in total spill volume of 3,630 litres compared to the previous year. This increase can be attributed to a single large spill where a storage tank was damaged, releasing 4,000 litres of waste oil.

Figure 3 – Number of spills by product category



For more information on spills, contact:

Environmental Protection and Waste Management 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

Table 1 – Volume (litres) of product spilled by category

	2018	2017
Wastewater	2,211,708	1,542,178
Chemicals	17,548	939
Fuel Oil	13,317	34,389
Lube Oil	6,716	3,905
Other	6,402	100,208
Waste Oil	4,100	470
Mixed Load	809	2,994
Gasoline	323	1,105
Unknown	200	120
Total	2,263,141	1,688,325

Residential oil tank spills

Since the release of the [Homeowners' Guide to Oil Tanks](#) and the requirement for new oil tanks to be double walled in 2010, the number of spills reported from residential oil tanks (defined as tanks under 1,136 litres) has followed a continuous downward trend.

The [Homeowners' Guide to Oil Tanks](#) was developed to inform individual homeowners and commercial building and property owners of the potential environmental and financial liabilities associated with an oil spill. It also provides some simple, practical steps that can minimize the chances of an oil spill.

Figure 4 – Number of spills from residential oil tanks

