

# 2013- Spills and Releases Rulemaking

In February 2014 the COGCC updated spill reporting requirements and tightened thresholds for reporting spills. Per COGCC rules, a spill is defined as any observable release of exploration and production (E&P) fluids or produced fluids spilled onsite which can include crude oil, condensate, salty water produced from a well, treatment fluids used during hydraulic fracturing, or diesel fuel used to power drilling rig generators. Rule 906 of the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (COGCC) establishes requirements for spills and releases. Rule 906.a. requires operators investigate, clean up, and document impacts from spills to the COGCC and Rule 906.b. defines reportable spills and reporting requirements for spills/releases.

Under the rules updated in February 2014, an operator must report to the Director of the COGCC, verbally or in writing (within 24 hours of discovery), a spill or release in which one (1) barrel of more of E&P waste or produced fluids is spilled or released outside of berms or other secondary containment or a spill exceeding five (5) barrels within 24 hours after discovery.<sup>1</sup> The threshold under the previous rule was within 24 hours for twenty (20) barrels. Additionally, the term “produced fluids” was added to clarify that spills of oil, condensate, or natural gas liquids must be reported along with other exploration and production (E&P) waste. The other key change under amended rule 906.b. requires operators to report certain spills to the surface owner and local governments within 24 hours.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://cogcc.state.co.us/documents/reg/Rules/LATEST/900series.pdf>