

Armored Truck Fuel Spill Draws Quick Cleanup Response

Hudson, Mass. – Any diesel fuel spill, even a minor one, requires fast action to avoid environmental damage. But when the leaking truck is heavily armored and full of cash, the incident is cause for alarm. That was evident recently when an armored truck spilled an estimated 20 gallons of diesel fuel in the parking lot of a retail store in Memphis, Tenn. The incident, resulting from a damaged fuel cross-over line, was managed by Spill Center®, an environmental claims and spill support company, from its base in Hudson, Mass.

The armored truck company had not previously needed to use the spill support services of Spill Center. In fact, the armored truck company hadn't had a spill requiring environmental cleanup in more than seven years, related Tom Moses, an environmental attorney and president of Spill Center, which he founded over 20 years ago.

Clients rely on Spill Center to provide expertise in spill management and regulatory matters to avoid fines and penalties for non-compliance with local, state and federal environmental reporting rules and minimize cleanup costs and potential liability, explained Moses.

“The spill generator is always liable for fines and penalties arising from spills and the failure to report environmental releases. Insurance never pays for that. The challenge for companies involved in spills arises from the ‘maze of regulations’ and reporting requirements, which can change from one jurisdiction to the next,” he noted.

Spill Center compliance associates, who include legal, technical and environmental specialists, coordinate spill response and complete telephone and written reports for clients. They fill out more than 300 DOT Incident Report Forms each month as part of Spill Center's program of spill-related services for clients, said Moses. The company maintains a database of current regulations for nearly 30,000 federal, state and local jurisdictions throughout North America, he said.

“All applicable reporting and cleanup requirements must be strictly followed or the spill generator likely will have to face the consequences – which can be very costly,” continued Moses. “Truck accidents with spills of diesel fuel or hazmat require a prompt and efficient response to contain the costs and limit potential liability associated with these environmental releases. Penalties for failure to comply with regulatory reporting requirements can be severe,” he added.

Most spills processed by Spill Center involve diesel fuel from ruptured truck saddle tanks and broken cross-over lines, as in the case of the armored truck, said Moses. Spill Center advises clients on proper procedures for cleanup and disposal of waste materials. Information on more than 3,000 cleanup contractors in the U.S. and Canada is also kept on file at Spill Center, Moses related.

In the armored truck fuel spill, the company's loss prevention manager called Spill Center as he soon as he learned about it from the driver, Moses recounted. A compliance associate pulled up the client's pre-filed spill contingency plan, containing the company's spill handling instructions, company contacts, preferred contractors and other information tailored to the client's operation.

Spill Center contacted the Memphis branch of First Response, Inc. to respond to the spill. Moses noted that the compliance associate was in phone contact with the contractor when the team arrived at the site and, again, when the cleanup was finished. First Response had applied an absorbent material to the spill and generated two 55-gallon drums of waste for disposal.

According to Moses, the loss prevention manager acknowledged that the armored truck company was “pretty rusty” at handling environmental releases, since it hadn't had a spill in

such a long time. He was relieved at how quickly Spill Center got the cleanup crew on scene and kept him informed throughout, noted Moses.

Spill Center offers tailored services to trucking fleets, private carriers, truck leasing companies, chemical and environmental companies, insurers and railroads, said Moses. "No company should ever have enough spills to get good at handling them or to justify using their own resources and management to protect itself," he observed.

More information on Spill Center is at www.spillcenter.com, located at 22 Kane Industrial Dr., Hudson MA 01749. Or call Tom Moses at (978) 568-1922 (x 222). Fax (978) 568-1945. E-mail: tmoses@spillcenter.com.