



SPILL CENTER

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NEWS RELEASE

Audit of Contractor's Invoice Yields Savings for Carrier after Fuel Spill

Hudson, Mass. – Close inspection of a cleanup contractor's invoice for work down after a diesel fuel spill on an icy road in February saved one bulk carrier more than \$1,700, according to Spill Center, a leading spill-management specialist.

A tank trailer belonging to St. Louis, Mo.-based Slay Transportation jackknifed in southeastern Pennsylvania early one morning, hospitalizing the driver and spilling 40-50 gallons of diesel fuel from a ruptured saddle tank. None of the cargo, toluene diisocyanate, a toxic chemical used in the production of polyurethane products, was released, but a product transfer was needed, related Tom Moses, Spill Center president.

State Police arrived at the scene and notified the carrier and a local cleanup contractor. The York County Emergency Management Agency was also on scene. Upon learning of the accident, Slay Transportation's safety director notified Spill Center's 24/7 call center in Hudson, Mass. to make required incident reports, Moses said.

For nearly 20 years, Spill Center has been providing support services to subscribers in the transportation, chemical and insurance industries to help control spill-related costs and limit liability. The company specializes in assessing and managing hazardous materials incidents, diesel fuel spills and releases of other regulated materials, noted Moses, an environmental attorney and former US EPA toxicologist.

A Spill Center compliance associate took down the details of the Slay Transportation incident and determined which agencies needed to be contacted. Spill Center maintains a database of more than 3,300 local, state and federal jurisdictions for this purpose, explained Moses. Another database maintains contacts and information on qualified environmental cleanup contractors throughout North America. Spill Center receives no compensation from contractors, he commented.

Compliance Associate Calvin Teixeira handled the spill. "We notified each agency that requires reports and contacted the cleanup contractor at the scene to go over requirements for the product transfer and site remediation," he recounted. "Normally, we also provide a list of qualified local contractors to the subscriber to select from, but in this case, the police already had a contractor on the scene."

The site was excavated and the contaminated soil, which filled two roll-off containers, was ready to be taken to a disposal site. "At that point, we got a quote for the disposal from the contractor, and forwarded it to Slay Transportation," Teixeira continued. "We sent written reports to the regulatory agencies, advising them that the remediation and disposal had been completed." All required reports, both by telephone and written, had been filed on behalf of the carrier, avoiding fees and fines for non-compliance, he said.

Slay Transportation is the 13th largest bulk carrier in the U.S., running an ultra-modern fleet of 700 tractors and 1,200 trailers – with an average trailer age of 5 years. Over 550 drivers work for the company, which has an excellent safety record and a collection of safety awards to prove it, according to Ted Tahan, Jr., vice president and general counsel. The carrier is part of Slay Industries, a group of transportation and distribution companies.

Staying Prepared for Spills

A long-time Spill Center subscriber, Slay Transportation doesn't have many spills which require emergency cleanup, related Tahan. "We use Spill Center a couple of times a year, sometimes on non-emergency incidents. They do an outstanding job. It's the ease of reporting and the quality of their employees," he added. "You're talking to people who know exactly what needs to be done, and they do it efficiently."

Slay runs 48 states, as well as Canada and Mexico, traveling through hundreds of different jurisdictions requiring reports after spills. "There is absolutely no way on Earth we could keep track of all those individual cities, counties, states and federal reporting regulations," Tahan noted. "Knowing that Spill Center stays on top of all of the regulatory requirements is a relief. The same thing applies to their cleanup contractor database. We know we can get the assistance we need after a spill with a single phone call to Spill Center," he observed.

After the incident in Pennsylvania, the invoice sent by the contractor for work performed was received by Tahan, who, in turn, forwarded it to Spill Center to review. Invoice auditing is a Spill Center service that many subscribers request, especially for high-cost cleanup projects. The auditing service evaluates all charges from contractors, emergency responders and other service providers to determine that they are reasonable and in order. At Spill Center, the contractor's invoice was audited by Senior Compliance Associate Tracie Murphy.

"During my telephone conversations with the contractor, we discussed several of the invoiced charges, and he offered to reduce the total amount by 2%," related Murphy. "He also reduced the hourly charge for the roll-off truck which handled the contaminated soil at the site, and he reduced the charge for Level C personal-protection gear. Plus, he deleted charges for a chemical hose, photography and an administration fee," she added.

The total reduction of the invoiced amount came to more than \$1,700, and a credit memo was issued by the contractor to the carrier. Tahan had been following the auditing process through e-mails from Murphy, who kept him in the loop during her communications with the contractor. The carrier had used Spill Center's invoice auditing service in the past and saved even more on occasion, Tahan recalled.

"Spill Center did an extraordinarily good job on our behalf for handling that situation. That is precisely why we will continue to sign up for the service," said Tahan. "Spill Center is a great resource for any carrier, and I recommend them wholeheartedly."

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