



Sustainability Alert

Hazardous Material Storage and Disposal

Date: Issued 8 April 2026

Context:

RMIT University remains committed to safeguarding the environment by ensuring strict compliance with best practices for storing and disposing of hazardous materials and waste. It is necessary to prioritise proper handling, storage, and containment of all hazardous materials that, if discharged, can have severe environmental impacts.

Preventing accidental discharge into the environment is critical in achieving our sustainability goals and meeting regulatory obligations under the Environment Protection Act.

General Environmental Duty (GED):

Under Victorian law, every individual and business has a General Environmental Duty (GED), which requires them to take all reasonable steps to prevent harm to the environment and human health. This responsibility extends to the proper storage and management of hazardous materials, ensuring they do not enter our environment through spills or improper use and disposal.

Compliance with EPA Legislation:

Compliance with EPA Victoria's regulations is essential. The Environment Protection Act enforces the prevention of pollution and mandates that all Victorians comply with the GED. Discharge of toxic or hazardous materials into the environment can result in legal action, fines, and significant environmental harm. It is crucial that all hazardous material storage practices align with these regulations to avoid serious repercussions.

Actions:

1. **Proper Storage:** Ensure all hazardous materials are stored in designated, compliant containment units. Containers must be labelled, sealed, and regularly inspected for leaks or damage. Also ensure all Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) are in proximity.
2. **Secondary Containment:** Where applicable, implement secondary containment (e.g., bunding) to prevent spillage from reaching drains or soil.
3. **No Discharge:** Under no circumstances should these materials be discharged into the environment, including drains, soil, or waterways. Discharging hazardous materials is a direct violation of the Environment Protection Act and can lead to significant penalties.
Report Incidents: All incidents that involve the spill or discharge of hydrocarbon and chemicals should be reported to the Property Services Desk (03 9925 2111) and recorded in our incident management system SafetyNow (<https://www.rmit.edu.au/about/our-values/health-safety-wellbeing/global-safety-model/risk-incident-management/incident-management-investigation>).
4. **Spill Response Plan:** All storage areas must have spill kits available, and staff should be trained in proper spill response procedures.

Questions:

If there are any questions on the above, please contact the Property Services, Sustainability Team:

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