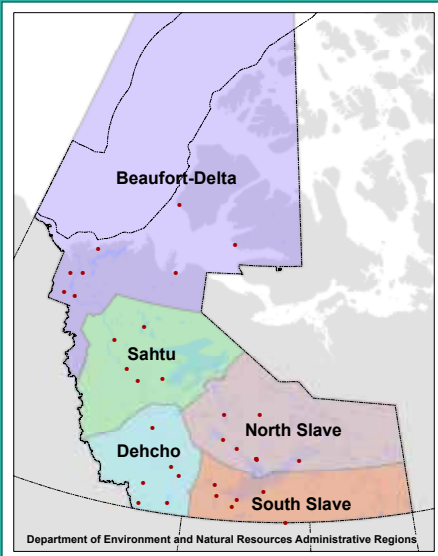


2019 Northwest Territories Spills Report



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 2019.

- 208 spills were reported in 2019, 29 more than 2018 (16% increase).
- 56% of the reported spills were less than 100 litres or 100 kilograms.
- Spills at mining operations have decreased by 7% since 2018. While there was an increase in spills at mining operations in 2018, there has been a general downward trend in these spills since 2009.
- Spills at government operations have increased by 5% since 2018, however since 2009 the overall number of spills at government operations has been declining.
- 39% of spills reported in 2019 involved fuel oil.
- The number of spills from home oil tanks is down by 77% since 2010, when ENR released the [Homeowners' Guide to Oil Tanks](#).

Where did the spills occur?

In 2019, 208 spills were reported to the 24-Hour Spill Report Line in the NWT. Of those, 52% occurred in the North Slave region. Figure 1 shows the number of reported spills by region from 2015 to 2019.

The following is a breakdown of reported spills by sector for 2019:

- Mining operations 25%
- Government operations (municipal, territorial, and federal) 25%
- Transportation companies 12%
- Private individuals 11%
- Petroleum operations 9%
- Others 8%
- Construction sites 5%
- Unknown parties 5%

Figure 1 – Number of spills by region

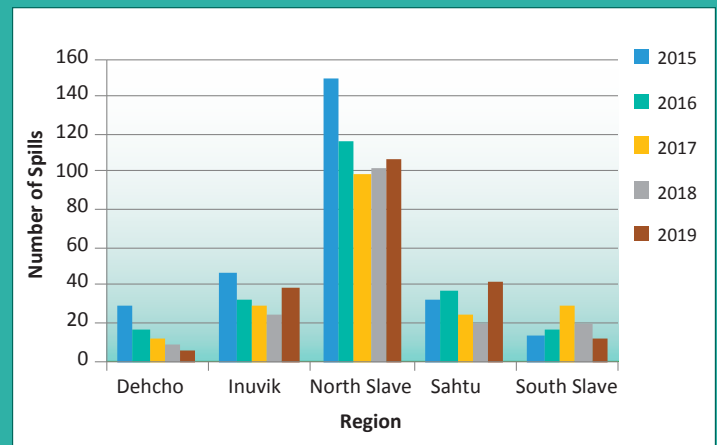
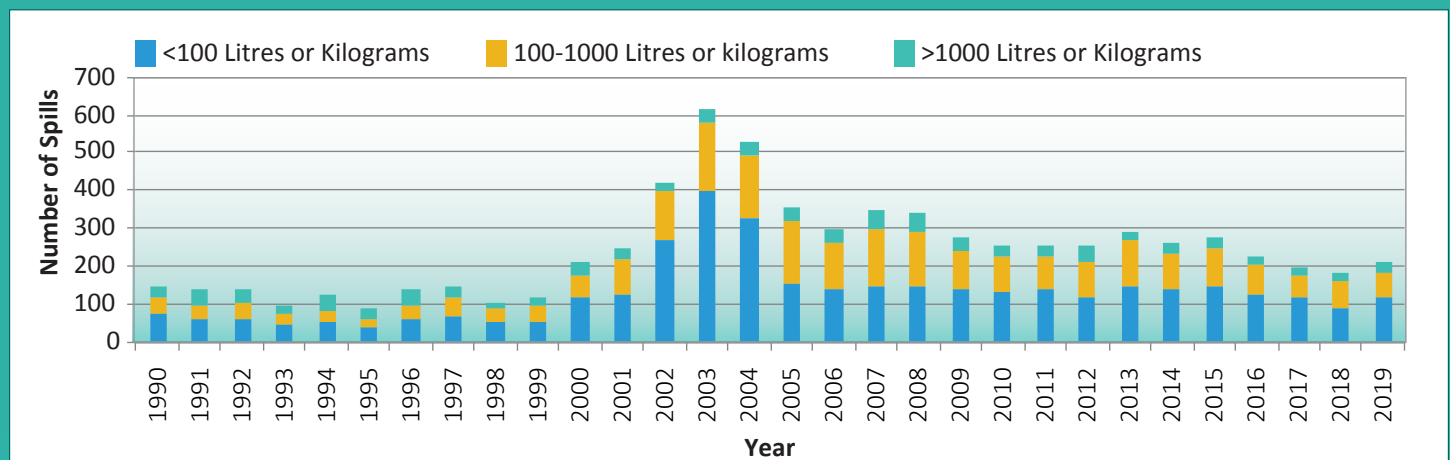


Figure 2 – Number of spills by year



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What and how much was spilled?

Wastewater, which includes sewage, mine tailings and other types of contaminated water, accounted for 20% of reported spills. In 2019, there was one less wastewater spill than 2018 and the total volume reported decreased by 1,904,897 litres.

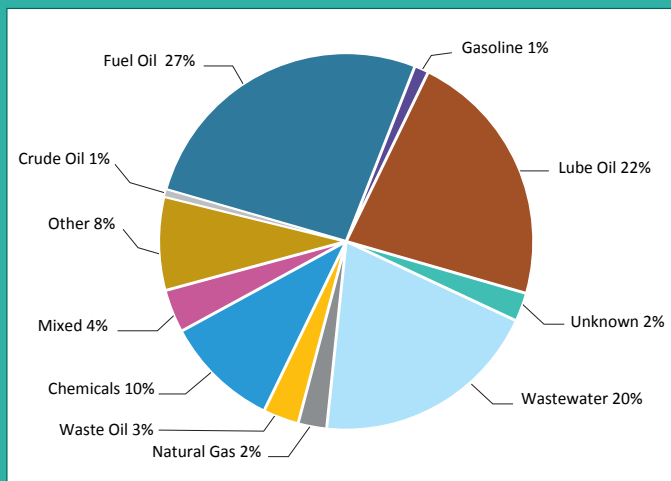
Mixed load spills are spills where multiple products are spilled. These spills are uncommon, as containers and systems usually only have one chemical in them when a spill occurs. The largest mixed load spill in March 2019 involved approximately 6,000,000 litres of water used to extinguish a fire at the Hay River Landfill.

Fuel oil, which includes diesel and heating fuel, accounted for 27% of the 208 spills reported in 2019. This represents an increase of 42% compared to 2018. The volume of fuel oil spilled also increased by 126,719 litres compared to 2018.

There was an increase in natural gas spilled in 2019 compared to 2018. This is attributed to a single event at a production facility resulting in an estimated 61,000,000 litres of natural gas released into the environment.

Figure 3 shows the number of spills reported in 2019 in each product category and Table 1 summarizes the total volume of product spilled in each category.

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

Category	2019	2018
Natural Gas	61,000,000	0
Mixed Load	6,000,020	809
Wastewater	306,811	2,211,708
Fuel Oil	140,035	13,317
Lube Oil	13,451	6,716
Waste Oil	5,463	4,100
Chemicals	5,329	17,548
Other	3,847	6,402
Gasoline	0	323
Total	67,474,956	2,263,141

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 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

