

Why Should I Choose an AusSpill Compliant Spill Kit?

In November, 2018 the Australian peak spill control industry body, AusSpill, published the AusSpill quality guidelines for Spill Response Kits. These guidelines set requirements for appearance, labelling, description, testing and performance claims of spill kits.

The Australian Standard AS4123.7-2006 sets out the colour designation for mobile bins commonly used for waste and also spill response kits. **If you use yellow, blue and red bins for spill kits you may be in direct conflict with AS4123.7.**

After a long period of research and working closely with mobile bin manufacturers, it was determined that lime green bins are not currently being used for any purpose in Australia. The lime green colour does not conflict with AS4123.7. This presented an opportunity to the spill control industry to have a unique colour so that users can quickly differentiate a spill kit from a refuse bin. The requirement for a lime green bin body is covered in Section 5 of the AusSpill quality standard.

Section 5 goes on to state the requirement for identifying the different types of spill kits through the use of colour coded lids. White lid for Oil Only, grey for General Purpose and yellow for Hazchem.

Section 6 of the AusSpill spill kit quality guidelines sets out the terminology to be used to describe the application of a spill kit. It is broken down into 3 categories; General Purpose, Hazchem and Oil & Fuel Only.

Minimum font size of identifying labels is covered in section 7 of the standard. It states that the primary spill kit descriptors must be in clear 50mm high capitals against a contrasting background.

One of the most important aspects of the standard is the requirement that all sorbent components of a spill kit are submitted to an independent AusSpill approved laboratory to test sorbents to BS7959-1, "Materials used for the control of liquid spillages, Determination of Sorbency".

Because of the lack of regulation in the area of spill response and control, stated capacities of spill kits are often inaccurate. As well as being contrary to consumer laws, it made it impossible for consumers to be able to compare different brands of spill kits. This lack of transparency also put spill kit users in the position of not being able to address a chemical spill effectively. Failure to clean up chemical spill can lead to significant fines from both environment and safety regulators.

This testing regime that now applies to all spill kits bearing the "AusSpill Compliant" mark of compliance gives users the confidence that the spill kit will perform as required.

The AusSpill quality guidelines are an important step toward the introduction of an Australian Standard to further regulate spill response and control equipment. AusSpill already has written stakeholder support from environment and safety regulators around Australia and New Zealand, AFAC and relevant industry associations.

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