



Fertilizer Safety & Security Council

Conseil de la sécurité en fertilisation

## AMMONIA CODE OF PRACTICE

---

BULLETIN # 2  
FEBRUARY 2009

### Public Notification Requirements in the Code of Practice

People living or working near an ammonia facility are entitled to know that the operation is there and what the hazard is in the event of an emergency. It is the responsibility of agri-retailers to inform the public about the ammonia facility in their community and to take extra precautions, as outlined in the Ammonia Code of Practice.

The Ammonia Code of Practice, launched by the Fertilizer Safety & Security Council, applies to all agri-retail facilities in Canada that store or retail anhydrous ammonia. All anhydrous ammonia retail sites in Canada will need to pass an audit and be fully compliant with the standards outlined in the Ammonia Code of Practice by the end of 2010.

#### Informing the Public

There are different requirements for agri-retailers concerning “contact with local people” depending on the distance of the operation from where people live and work. **The general rule is that the closer the operation is to buildings where people live and work, the more information agri-retailers are required to provide them with.**

Please note that if it is a city, town or hamlet, “contact with local people” means sending one letter to the local representative such as the mayor or reeve. If it is an evacuation sensitive facility such as a hospital or school it means sending one letter to the manager or principal. If it is a local resident it means sending one letter to the family.

#### *Within 3 kilometres*

Agri-retailers are required to communicate annually with occupancies within a 3 kilometre radius of the operation as outlined in Section G2.2 of the Ammonia Code of Practice. Communication must be in the form of a dated and signed written letter and must include information on:

- the presence of anhydrous ammonia (including address of facility); and
- the communications process to alert people in the event of an emergency (e.g. local media, bull horns or some other means).

It is very important for agri-retailers to keep copies of all dated letters to demonstrate compliance with the Ammonia Code of Practice.

#### *Within 1.5 kilometres*

Ammonia facilities within 1.5 kilometres of occupancies must also maintain annual contact with local people in the form of a letter. Since they are closer to where people live or work, they must provide more information than facilities within 3 kilometres. According to Section A1.2(a) of the Ammonia Code of Practice, the annual letter must provide:

- a fact sheet about the nature and hazards associated with ammonia anhydrous ammonia;
- basic information on emergency response including contact numbers; and
- an indication of the emergency response procedure including the potential to be asked to shelter-in-place.

#### *Within 500 metres or less than 100 metres*

If the facility is located within 500 metres of the boundary of a town or evacuation sensitive facility or less than 100 metres from any occupancy (e.g. rural resident), the ammonia facility must send an annual letter with the same content as the one outlined for facilities within 1.5 kilometres. This is outlined in Section A.1.2(b) of the Ammonia Code of Practice.

In addition, these facilities must also invite local people to participate in an emergency response preparedness session on an annual basis. This session must cover the essential elements of the operation's emergency response plan as it applies to the local people. Typical content would include awareness of the nature and properties of ammonia, type of incident that might occur, contact information in case of an emergency and emergency measures such as shelter in place.

While it is ideal to have everyone attend, it is not a requirement of the Code. It is a requirement, however, for people to be provided the opportunity to attend.

#### Taking extra precautions

##### *Pullaway protection*

For operations close to people, extra precautions are required for hoses where loading and unloading is conducted. The objective is to decrease the likelihood of the hose being disconnected or ruptured. If loading or unloading occurs less than 500 metres from the

boundary of a city or town or evacuation sensitive facility, or within 100 metres of any occupancy, **pullaway protection** must be installed.

In Section A1.2(c), the Code defines pullaway protection as emergency shutoff capability in the event of a disconnected hose or a vehicle moving away before a loading or unloading. Examples include tripod couplers and wire actuated emergency shutoff devices. Excess flow valves are not regarded as adequate for compliance with this section.

### *Extra security measures*

When an ammonia operation is within close proximity to where people live or work, there are also **extra security measures** required. As outlined in Section A.12(d) of the Ammonia Code of Practice, all fencing must be topped by three strands of barbed wire and some form of security lighting must be installed.

Remember that the Ammonia Code of Practice incorporates the principle of “equivalency” which allows flexibility to meet or exceed safety and security levels established in the code. It is recognized that there may be several ways, and better ways, to meet a code requirement that is not described in the Ammonia Code of Practice or implementation manual.

All ammonia agri-retailers need to contact a certified ammonia code auditor to sign up for a mandatory audit. For a list of our auditors please visit our website ([www.fssc.ca](http://www.fssc.ca)). Prior to your audit, you should familiarize yourself with the Ammonia Code of Practice and accompanying implementation guide. Both are posted on the Fertilizer Safety and Security Council website.

To assist you with further questions and help prepare for your audit, a hotline has been established. Retailers can call toll-free (866) 311-0444 or direct (416) 260-2432 to speak with a representative about the program's implementation schedule, interpretation of code requirements or any other aspect of the program.