



LABORATORY CHEMICAL SPILL CLEAN UP PROCEDURE & REPORTING POLICY^{1 2}

Definitions: Chemical spills are any spill of chemical substances into a non-controlled environment. These spills may be relatively small in laboratory environments. Regardless of the size of the spill, these procedures should be always followed.

Purpose: To insure that appropriate procedures are followed to prevent contamination of the environment, security of the area during clean up, and the safety of all individuals involved in the clean up process.

Scope: This procedure applies to all Environmental Health and Safety personnel, laboratory personnel and if in a teaching environment all students. Only Hazardous Waste Operations (HAZWOPER) trained and certified personnel are authorized to assess spills, clean up spills within their capacity, or make the decision to elevate the situation to a HAZMAT level.

Procedure: If the hazardous material spill is "small" (usually less than one liter), **AND** you know and understand the hazards associated with the material, **AND** you have the proper personal protective equipment available, proceed with containment and cleanup. Remember, the spill cleanup material may be considered a hazardous waste and must be disposed of properly. It is imperative that each spill regardless of size be reported immediately!³

If the spill is "large" and/or you are not qualified to understand the hazards associated with the material or the proper procedures for cleanup, then the initial report of a chemical spill will be reported to Public Safety/fire department. If EH&S personnel are notified directly by the individual(s) reporting the spill, the Director and/or Chemical Coordinator will be informed. They will be responsible for notifying Public Safety Dispatch at 911 of a spill situation and the need for security in the area until such time as remediation of the spill may be accomplished. It is imperative that each spill regardless of size be reported immediately!

¹ Original source for the majority of this document July 14, 2003, Creighton University

² Additional information from University of Idaho Hazardous Materials Policies, 2008.

³ All incidents involving a release of hazardous materials directly into the environment (i.e., into a body of water or onto the ground) must be reported to EHS immediately.

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If the hazardous material incident involves serious injury or exposure, a fire and/or an explosion, first call 911 and then the Environmental Health and Safety. Please provide the same information listed below in step 1 items “a” through “f”.

If the situation requires immediate evacuation, pull the building fire alarm and leave the building. Contact the first responder or fire chief when they arrive to explain the situation and provide additional information.

1. Regardless of how notification of a spill is received, the following information at minimum must be obtained:

- a. Time/date of the incident
- b. Location
- c. Name of Informant
- d. Material spilled (if known)
- e. Quantity spilled (if known)
- f. Injuries if known

2. EH&S personnel reporting to the scene should be equipped with generalized personnel protective equipment (PPE) as may be required to safely clean up the spill. This may include respirator, gloves, goggles or other face protection, Tyvek suits *etc.* When known from notification, spill clean up material should also be taken in adequate estimated quantity to clean the spill. When the exact nomenclature of the spill is known from the initial report, a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) should be reviewed for PPE, health hazards, reactivity and other issues. Questions about reactivity, safe distances, and general cleanup can usually be found in Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) or can be found either in the latest edition of the “Emergency Response Guidebook”, or PC/Web version of the Hazmat Buddy utility program.⁴

3. Upon arrival at the scene of the spill, assessment of the situation is critical to remediation. If there is immediate danger to life or health (IDLH), the area (possibly the building) should be evacuated by Public Safety at the discretion of EH&S personnel on the scene, and the local Fire Department (FD) HAZMAT team should be requested through Public Safety Dispatch. If the situation is not, in the opinion of EH&S, IDLH in nature, assessment of the area to include controlled access to the spill areas will be requested from Public Safety until the spill is remediated. Assessment will include type of material and quantity necessary to appropriately

⁴ Copies of the Emergency Response Guidebook and PC version of Hazmat Buddy can be obtained from Sorb.com.

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clean the spill and or disinfect as necessary, type of PPE required for the safety of the individual cleaning the spill and disposal of the chemical waste and clean up materials as hazardous waste. When FD HAZMAT is called, the Captain of the HAZMAT team will assume command of the area and situation until such time as their assessment is made and either clean up is initiated or the control of the situation is turned back over to EH&S. Public Safety security of the area will be maintained until such time as the spill has been deemed to be cleaned up and security is no longer required.

4. Documentation of the spill will be accomplished as a memo for record either in e-mail form or by formal memo to the Director of EH&S and/or Director of Facilities Management, and Director of Public Safety.

Memo for record will include:

1. Chemical Spilled (nomenclature)
2. Quantity (estimated)
3. Name of reporting Individual(s)
4. Public Safety support (HAZMAT team info, if team is called)
5. Time(s) of information received, actions taken, departure from clean up site.
6. Review of MSDS
7. Disposition of chemical waste and clean up materials.
8. Injuries of any individual involved in the incident or clean up process.
9. Clean up procedure(s) and materials used in the clean up.
10. Analysis of spill (what caused the spill/preventative measures that might prevent recurrence, etc.)

IN ALL CASES, MEMOS FOR RECORD WILL INCLUDE ONLY STATEMENTS OF FACT.

Responsibility: It will be the responsibility of the Director of EH&S to review all memos of record of chemical spills to insure completeness and accuracy. Memos of record are to be filed indefinitely. It is also the Director's responsibility to insure that only qualified (HAZWOPER trained) personnel clean up reported spills.

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