

## Chemical Spill Control

### REPORTING SPILLS

When chemicals are spilled or are otherwise released from containment, the laboratory or shop supervisor is responsible for ensuring that releases are appropriately reported, cleaned up, and disposed of.

### Applicability

This section includes procedures for reporting, containing, cleaning up, and disposing of uncontrolled releases of chemicals.

### Radioactive Materials

This procedure does not apply to spills of radioactive substances. During working hours, contact the Radiation Safety Office (RSO) for assistance with radioactive releases; telephone 509-335-8916. Telephone 911 or the Facilities Services, Operations dispatcher at 509-335-9000 during evenings and weekends.

Refer to *SPPM* 9.40 for decontamination procedures for radioactive substances.

### Biohazardous Materials

This procedure does not apply to spills, releases, or improper disposal of biological materials, e.g., biohazardous waste, dead animals. Call 911 or the local county/area emergency response number for assistance with these releases (see *SPPM* 4.24).

### When to Ask for Help

The supervisor immediately determines whether or not his or her staff in the work area are capable of managing the release.

For assistance, Pullman campus units contact the Pullman Fire Department and Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) by calling 911. Non-Pullman campus units contact the local fire department or the local county/area emergency response number.

Seek assistance if *any* of the following conditions exist:

- Personnel qualified to clean up the release are not available in the work area (*WAC* 296-62, Part R).
- Protective equipment or supplies necessary for the cleanup (e.g., respirators, absorbents) are not available.
- Released chemical material cannot be identified.
- Volume of the released chemical material exceeds one liter of undiluted material, or four liters of diluted material.
- Released chemical material is potentially explosive or highly flammable.

5.62.2

Revised 8-00

Reviewed 9-03

Environmental Health and Safety

509-335-3041

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### **When to Ask for Help (cont.)**

- Released chemical material is highly toxic.
- Released chemical material is outside the employee's immediate work area.

### **Calling for Help**

Pullman Campus/Whitman  
County

If the Pullman campus or Whitman County work area staff are not capable of managing a chemical spill or release, evacuate personnel from the affected area and *telephone 911 to report the spill or release.*

Keep personnel from re-entering the affected area.

Pull the fire alarm if the circumstances are serious or grave.

NOTE: If mercury is spilled in a nonpublic area at WSU Pullman or Whitman County during normal working hours, *do not* call 911. Contact EH&S; telephone 509-335-3041. A nonpublic area is a room to which access can be controlled by some means, i.e., a door. A public area is an area such as a hallway, lobby, or sidewalk.

### *Emergency Call*

When placing a 911 emergency call, provide the following information to the dispatcher:

- Name
- Location of the release, i.e., building and room number
- Nature of the emergency, e.g., fire, spill, etc.
- Names and quantities of chemicals involved, if known
- Location where the responders will be met by the reporting person or departmental personnel
- Telephone number of the safe location where the 911 emergency call originates

Answer any questions from the dispatcher.

Non-Whitman County Location

If the non-Whitman County location work area staff are not capable of managing a chemical spill or release, evacuate personnel from the affected area and *telephone the local county/area emergency response number to report the spill or release.*

Keep personnel from re-entering the affected area.

Pull the fire alarm if the circumstances are serious or grave.

## Chemical Spill Control

### *Emergency Call*

When placing a call to the local county/area emergency response number, provide the following information to the dispatcher:

- Name
- Location of the release, i.e., building and room number
- Nature of the emergency, e.g., fire, spill, etc.
- Names and quantities of chemicals involved, if known
- Location where the responders will be met by the reporting person or departmental personnel
- Telephone number of the safe location where the 911 emergency call originates

Answer any questions from the dispatcher.

## SPILL PROCEDURES

### **Who May Clean Up Spills**

Personnel who work in the immediate area of a chemical spill, are familiar with the chemical, and are trained to safely contain and clean up chemical releases may clean up the spill. (WAC 296-62-41063) Typically, lab or service workers may clean up relatively small spills of relatively nondangerous, nontoxic materials in their immediate area (see [When to Ask for Help](#)).

Each work unit must have a specific, written emergency plan in place for handling spills or releases before an employee may clean up a chemical spill. Refer to the *Laboratory Safety Manual* for a complete list of emergency plan requirements.

All employees responding to spills must be fully trained in accordance with the department's emergency plan.

University personnel from locations outside the immediate work area may not respond to or clean up a chemical spill unless they are trained and certified in an EPA/DOE approved and certified course. Environmental Health and Safety spill responders have completed such training. A supervisor may not identify an employee as a chemical spill management employee unless the employee has completed certified training.

See EH&S for information concerning certified chemical spill management training.

### **Cleanup and Disposal**

Environmental Health and Safety trained laboratory or service workers may use neutralizing or absorbent materials, or mechanical devices to clean up the contaminant.

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### **Cleanup and Disposal (cont.)**

Place cleanup materials and contaminants in appropriate waste containers and dispose of as required (see *SPPM 5.66*).

### **Reporting**

Trained laboratory or service workers performing spill cleanup must report the spill to EH&S to properly document the incident.

Environmental Health and Safety is solely responsible for reporting chemical releases to regulatory authorities when required by law.

### **Reoccupation**

Prior to reoccupation, EH&S performs area monitoring as appropriate to determine whether harmful residual contamination exists.

### **Reoccupation (cont.)**

If necessary, EH&S initiates special decontamination procedures to ensure that the health and safety of future occupants of the site will not be compromised. After decontamination, EH&S performs further environmental monitoring to ensure that the area is suitable for reoccupancy.

### **Records Maintenance**

Regulatory agencies require that the University maintain records of spill management activity. Departments performing spill control maintain the records; otherwise, such records are maintained by EH&S (see *BPPM 90.01*).

Spill management records must include the following information:

- Whether spills of regulated materials above threshold quantities were reported to the proper authorities in a timely manner.
- Whether residual contamination of the environment is present.
- Whether illness or injury resulted as a consequence of the spill.
- Whether personnel who responded to and/or cleaned up the spill were properly trained and were allowed access to medical surveillance.
- Whether the clean up residuals were properly managed.
- What actions were taken to minimize the chance of future occurrence of similar release(s).

## **Chemical Spill Control**

### **Medical Surveillance Records**

Human Resource Services (HRS) maintains medical surveillance records for employees who may be exposed to chemicals through cleanup or other activities.

Contact HRS for assistance; telephone 509-335-4521.