

# University of Louisville

## Spill/ Release Emergencies

### Chemical & Infectious Agents

#### Reporting a Chemical or Infectious Agent Spill

To report a spill or release of chemicals or infectious waste, contact the Department of Public Safety (DPS) at 852-6111. The communications officer will ask you several questions. Be prepared to provide the following information:

- The location of the spill/release
- The type of spill/release
- The material that was spilled/released
- Did the material go down a drain
- Amount spilled / released
- Your name
- Your telephone number or the location that you will be at when DEHS arrives

DPS acts as the communications receiving point for chemical and infectious agent spills and/or releases. DPS will immediately contact the Department for Environmental Health and Safety and a DEHS representative will contact you by telephone to assess the incident. The DEHS representative will advise you of the appropriate actions to take until their arrival, and will determine if any emergency response or regulatory agencies need to be notified.

If the spill is small and is of low toxicity, and if you have knowledge of the material and the proper protective equipment you may be instructed to contain and clean up the spilled material. If the spill is larger and more toxic, DEHS will send an emergency response team to contain and clean up the spill. If conditions warrant, DEHS will contact other emergency response personnel to assist.

Failure to report spills is a serious issue. Intentional failure to report spills can be a criminal offense. Timely reporting will protect you and the University from liability. DEHS will make notifications as appropriate and will act as the liaison with any regulatory agencies.

## Actions you should take for a Chemical or Infectious Spill

The following actions are recommended in the initial stages of a chemical or infectious agent spill or release:

- Notify persons in the immediate area that a spill has occurred.
- If necessary, leave the room and evacuate other people from the spill area.
- Avoid breathing vapors of the spilled material.
- Turn off ignition sources.
- Call DPS at 852-6111 and report the spill/release.
- Notify your supervisor.

## Preplanning to prevent or minimize chemical spills

Preplanning is the best way to prevent spills or control them when they do occur. DEHS will assist you in conducting emergency planning for your area. Contact the Environmental Operations & Hazardous Materials Manager for assistance.

Assistance in pre-planning emergencies in your laboratory can be obtained from DEHS by contacting the Environmental Operations & Hazardous Materials Manager.

Assistance to evaluate your laboratory can be obtained from DEHS by contacting the Laboratory Safety Coordinator.