Information
Chemical or Infectious Agent Spills

Applicability
This procedure applies to the University Community (administrators, faculty, staff, and students).

Administrative Authority
Senior Associate Vice President for Operations

Responsible Unit
Environmental Health and Safety
University of Louisville
Louisville, KY 40292
502-852-6670
dehsubm@louisville.edu

History
Revision Date(s):
Reviewed Date(s):

Categories

Reason for Procedure:
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.

Statement:
Actions you should take for a Chemical or Infectious Spill
The following actions are recommended in the initial stages of a chemical or infectious 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 University Police at 502-852-6111 and report the spill/release.
- Notify your supervisor.

Reporting a Chemical or Infectious Agent Spill

To report a spill or release of chemicals or infectious waste, contact University Police at 502-852-6111. University Police will immediately contact the Department of Environmental Health and Safety (DEHS). A DEHS representative will contact you by telephone to assess the incident.

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 the DEHS arrives.

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.

Related Information:

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 or laboratory. Contact the Environmental Operations Manager at 502-852-6670 for assistance.

Assistance to evaluate your laboratory can be obtained from DEHS by contacting the Laboratory Safety Coordinator at 502-852-2830.

Responsibilities:

University Police acts as the communications receiving point for chemical and infectious agent spills and/or releases.
DEHS will make notifications as appropriate and will act as the liaison with any regulatory agencies.