

LABORATORY/HAZARDOUS MATERIALS: MINOR SPILLS

Spill Definitions

A **minor spill** is defined as an event that can be handled safely without the assistance of EHSO or emergency response personnel.

A **major spill** is defined as an event that cannot be handled safely without the assistance of EHSO or emergency response personnel, including all events where a person is injured or contaminated.

- If someone is injured, call 911 from any campus phone or 404.727.6111.
- Call EHSO at 404.727.5922 during normal business hours (8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.)
- All other times call Emory Police at 911 from any campus phone or 404.727.6111.

Minor Spills

- Alert others in the immediate area.
- Leave the immediate area without contaminating other individuals and environments.
- If clothing is contaminated, remove, folding contamination inward, and treat as waste.
- Refer to Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) and appropriate cleanup guides for chemical spills. (MSDSs are found online at www.ehso.emory.edu/msds.htm.)
- Wear Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) appropriate for the material spilled (e.g., safety goggles, gloves, lab coat, etc.).
- Confine the spill to a limited area. Barricade and isolate the area to prevent spread of contamination.
- Pick up broken glass with tongs, forceps, or dustpan. Place in a puncture-resistant container.
- Be aware of inhalation hazards.
- Use appropriate neutralizer, disinfectant, and absorbents to mitigate the spill.
- Place spill cleanup materials in a container. Call EHSO for disposal at 404.727.5922.
- Wash arms, hands, and face with soap and water.

For assistance and advice call Environmental Health and Safety Office (EHSO) at 404.727.5922.

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Additional Spill Specific Advice

Radiation Spills—Minor

- Monitor the area for contamination.
- Decontaminate area with paper towels wetted with soapy water.
- Repeat cleanup until contamination is no longer detected.
- Monitor hands, shoes, and person for contamination.
- Report results in your survey log.

Biological (BSL 1&2) Spills—Minor

- Allow time for aerosols to settle.
- Wash potentially contaminated body parts with germicidal soap. Shower if necessary.
- Encircle with appropriate disinfectant (e.g., 10 percent bleach solution made fresh) in such a manner to minimize splashing. Allow the disinfectant a minimum of twenty minutes of contact time.
- Dispose of spill cleanup materials in biohazard waste.
- Decontaminate the affected area with disinfectant-soaked spill pillow or wipes.
- Wipe down outside of bags, containers, and equipment involved with disinfectant.
- Ensure that biohazard labels are attached to bags, containers, and equipment involved.

BSL 3 Laboratories

- Spills within BSL 3 facilities must follow internal posted Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). SOPs are the responsibility of the primary scientist.