Chemical Spill

The range and quantity of hazardous substances used in laboratories require preplanning to respond safely to chemical spills. Knowledgeable and experienced personnel should only perform the cleanup of a chemical spill. Spill kits with instructions, absorbents, reactants, and protective equipment should be available to clean up minor spills. A minor chemical spill is one that the laboratory staff is capable of handling safely without the assistance of safety and emergency personnel. All other chemical spills are considered major. Contact U of A Risk Management Services at 621-1790, to ensure proper procedures are being taken to clean up the spill.

Minor Chemical Spill:

- Alert people in immediate area of spill.
- Wear protective equipment, including safety goggles, gloves, and long-sleeve lab coat.
- Avoid breathing vapors from spill.
- Confine spill to small area.
- Use appropriate neutralizer for inorganic acids and bases. Absorb neutralized spill, collect residue, place in container, and dispose as chemical waste.
- For other chemicals, absorb spill with vermiculite, dry sand, or diatomaceous earth. Collect residue, place in container and dispose as chemical waste.
- Clean spill area with detergent and water.

Major Chemical Spill and Exposure:

- Attend to injured or contaminated persons and remove them from exposure.
- Alert people in the immediate area to evacuate.
- If spilled material is flammable, turn off ignition and heat sources.
- Call Chemical Spill Emergency Response number (621-1790).
- Close doors to affected area.
- If the exposure is to hydrofluoric acid, contact area should immediately be flushed with water and calcium gluconate applied to the burn area.
- Have person knowledgeable of incident and laboratory assist emergency personnel.