

DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

4516 Monarch Way, Norfolk, VA 23508

757-683-5116

Fax# 757-683-5660

E-mail: oem@odu.edu

Hazardous Materials

Hazardous materials are substances with dangerous ingredients - particularly chemicals that can hurt the environment, cause injury, or even death. When used with caution, they can be safely used in laboratory instruction, industry, agriculture, medicine, research, and even our homes. But if misused and released, they can be very harmful.

During A Small or Minor Spill

Minor spills of hazardous chemicals that pose little or no threat to the safety and health of personnel can be cleaned by following the warning and cautions on the container's label or the safety data sheet (SDS). If you need assistance with the cleanup of a spill, contact Old Dominion University Environmental Health and Safety at 757-683-4495 or the Old Dominion University Police Department at 757-683-4000.

During A Hazardous Materials Emergency

Procedures for laboratory personnel to handle chemical, biological, or radiological spills are provided in laboratory safety plans. Trained laboratory personnel are authorized to determine appropriate emergency responses for their areas. A hazardous materials emergency exists when cleanup of a hazardous material spill is beyond the level of staff knowledge, training, or ability and/or the situation is immediately dangerous to the life and health of persons in the spill area or facility.

If a hazardous materials emergency exists, follow these recommendations:

- Alert people in the immediate area of the spill and evacuate the room.
- Confine the hazard by closing doors as you leave the room.
- Use eyewash or safety showers as needed to rinse spilled chemicals off people.
- Evacuate any nearby rooms that may be affected. If the hazard will affect the entire building, evacuate the building.
- Notify the Old Dominion University Police Department at 757-683-4000, of the type of chemical, location, and size of the spill by calling 9-1-1. Always call from a safe location.

Reporting a Hazardous Materials Emergency

Emergency contact information may be posted on the entry door to the lab or room. If a hazardous materials emergency occurs, report the following information:

- Location of the spill, name of the chemical, and quantity.
- Name and telephone number of the caller.
- Extent of injuries, if any.
- Environmental concerns, such as the location of storm drains and streams.

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Chemical, Commercial Cleaning Products, and Solvent Spills

Any spill that could **POTENTIALLY** cause injury to a person or property must be reported to Environmental Health and Safety. If an immediate hazard exists or medical assistance is required, **CALL 757-683-4000 (or 9-1-1 if off-campus)**. For small spills or that pose no immediate danger to life or property:

- Confine the spill.
- Evacuate and secure the immediate area; only allow authorized personnel to access the contaminated area. Notify area supervisor.

Toxic Fumes Release

- Evacuate the area immediately if you smell gas or other toxic fumes, experience irritation, coughing, burning eyes, and/or difficulty breathing.
- If you smell gas in a dark room, **DO NOT** turn on lights; this action could ignite gas fumes. **DO NOT** touch, activate, or de-activate any power switches, fire alarms, lights, etc.
- Evacuate immediately and **CALL 757-683-4000 (or 9-1-1 if off-campus)**. **DO NOT** re-enter the area until advised to do so by emergency personnel.

Radioactive Leak or Spill

In the event of a radioactive leak or spill:

- Limit the spread of the spill.
- Notify others in the area that a spill has occurred. Keep untrained people out of the area.
- Call the Radiation Safety Officer in Environmental Health and Safety at 757-683-5834.

If skin contamination has occurred:

- Go to the nearest sink and wash the affected area with tepid water.
- Call the Radiation Safety Officer in Environmental Health and Safety.

Biological Release or Spill

In the event of a biological release or spill:

- Use personal protection and decontaminate the spill with appropriate disinfectant.
- For a large spill or release of highly infectious materials, notify everyone in the area, secure the area, then call Environmental Health and Safety immediately at 757-683-4495.

If a blood borne pathogen exposure or needle stick injury has occurred:

- Go to the nearest sink and wash affected area with warm water and soap.
- Call Environmental Health and Safety and seek medical attention immediately.