
Emergency Procedures

Biological Spills

The Principal Investigator must establish detailed spill cleanup measures tailored to the biological agent(s), amounts, and procedures used in the lab. The proper spill response material must be immediately accessible. Basic equipment is concentrated bleach, paper towels, household rubber gloves and forceps to pick-up broken glass. The following procedures should be utilized as a basis for cleaning spills of biological materials including bloodborne pathogens, potentially infectious agents, and recombinant or synthetic nucleic acid molecules.

• Small Biological Spills (< 1 liter)

- If the spill occurred inside a biological safety cabinet, close the sash and allow the cabinet to operate for 15 minutes before continuing with the spill cleanup.
- If the spill has a pathogen with an aerosol route of exposure, leave the room immediately and allow the aerosols to dissipate for 15 minutes.
- Alert people in area of spill and limit the access.
- Remove any contaminated protective clothing and place it in the biohazard waste.
- Don the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), which include a lab coat, gloves, eyes and face protection.
- Cover the spill with paper towels or any other absorbent material.
- Carefully pour disinfectant (10-20%v/v bleach) on the spill working from the outside toward the center.
- Allow sufficient contact time with the disinfectant (usually 15-20 minutes).
- Pick up towels and discard into the biohazard waste. Do not use hands if glass or other sharps are involved in the spill. Use forceps.
- Pick up broken glass with forceps and dispose of it in a Sharps container.
- Re-wipe the spill area with disinfectant.
- Remove the PPE and dispose of in the biohazard waste.
- Wash your hands with soap and water.
- Notify your supervisor of the incident.

• Large Biological Spills

- Alert lab personnel in the laboratory to the spill and keep people out of the area to prevent spread of the contamination.
- Check if you have been contaminated or if any of your PPE has been breached. If so follow exposure procedures.
- Remove any contaminated clothing and place it the biohazard waste.
- Wash your hands and post a sign on the door.
- Notify your supervisor of the incident and call OLS (4-8258) for assistance.
- If the situation involves an imminently life-threatening injury or has catastrophic potential, call 911.