

Spill protocols from the Office of Biological Safety

In any emergency situation, attention to immediate personal danger overrides containment considerations. Currently, there is no known biohazard on the University of Chicago campus that would prohibit properly garbed and masked fire or security personnel from entering any biological laboratory in an emergency.

Well-prepared staff can appropriately manage the majority of spills. One exception to this general rule is a spill of a significant volume outside of a biological safety cabinet (significance varies depending on the nature of the biohazard, but for purposes of this discussion, we define this to include cultures in excess of one liter in volume). For spills of this nature, please follow the **Incident Notification** procedure described at the end of this response protocol.

<p style="text-align: center;">HUMAN BLOOD (AND <u>O</u>TH<u>E</u>R <u>P</u>O<u>T</u>E<u>N</u>T<u>I</u>A<u>L</u>L<u>Y</u> <u>I</u>N<u>F</u>E<u>C</u>T<u>I</u>O<u>S</u> <u>H</u>U<u>M</u>A<u>N</u> <u>M</u>A<u>T</u>E<u>R</u>I<u>A</u>L<u>S</u>*) SPILL CLEANUP PROCEDURE</p>

1. Put on gloves and appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE): protective eyewear, lab coat, mask or face shield (if splashing is likely)
2. Remove any broken glass or sharp objects from the spill using mechanical means – forceps, hemostats, needle-nose pliers, broom and dust pan. **NEVER REMOVE SHARPS/BROKEN GLASS BY HAND!**
3. Contain the spill by covering with paper towels and carefully pour appropriate disinfectant solution** around and on the spill area. Take care not to splash disinfectant solution or create aerosols while pouring.
4. Remove the paper towels and repeat the process until all visible contamination is removed.
5. Re-wet cleaned area with disinfectant and air dry or let stand for 10 minutes before wiping dry.
6. Place all contaminated paper towels into a biohazard (“red”) bag or an autoclave bag for appropriate disposal (autoclaving or off-site disposal).
7. Remove all PPE and immediately wash hands.

***OPIM:** Semen, vaginal secretions, cerebrospinal fluid, synovial fluid, pleural fluid, pericardial fluid, peritoneal fluid, amniotic fluid, saliva in dental procedures, and any body fluid that is visibly contaminated with blood.

**For most spills, the best disinfectant is a 1:10 solution of household bleach, made fresh daily. Please consult the Office of Biological Safety if you have questions about the best disinfectant for your agent.

**BIOHAZARDOUS SPILL
INSIDE A BIOLOGICAL SAFETY CABINET (BSC)**

1. Immediately stop all work but leave the BSC blower fan on during cleanup.
2. The operator should be wearing gloves and a lab coat throughout the cleanup procedure. Cover spill with paper towels and carefully pour appropriate disinfectant* solution on to the spill-soaked paper towels.
3. With paper towels and the disinfectant, wipe down the walls and work-surface of the BSC and any equipment within the BSC that may have been contaminated.
4. Spray down the work surface with disinfectant. Examine the drain pan (for Type II BSCs) and flood the drain pan with disinfectant solution if the spill has contaminated the drain pan. Allow the disinfectant to stand at least 10 minutes.
5. If bleach or other chlorine-based disinfectant was used, wipe up excess disinfectant and spray work surface and BSC walls with 70% Ethanol/isopropyl alcohol to remove residual disinfectant as bleach can be corrosive.
6. Autoclave all contaminated waste.
7. Wash hands with soap and water.

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**SMALL BIOHAZARDOUS SPILL
OUTSIDE A BIOLOGICAL SAFETY CABINET (BSC)**

1. Immediately stop all work and notify workers in the immediate area about the spill. If possible, place paper towels on the spill to contain it prior to leaving the area.
2. If necessary, remove contaminated clothing and place into a biohazard bag, wash all contaminated body parts, and flush exposed mucous membranes with water or physiological saline solution.

3. Cover spill with paper towels and carefully pour an appropriate disinfectant solution* on to the spill-soaked paper towels. Allow a minimum of 10 minutes contact time with disinfectant. The operator should be wearing gloves and a lab coat during this procedure. Mucous membrane protection (safety glasses or a face shield) should also be worn in the event of a splash.
4. If broken glass or sharp objects are present, handle with tongs, forceps, brush and dustpan, or other mechanical means. Place broken glass in sharps container. Do not use your hands!
5. Wipe up spill/excess disinfectant and place paper towels and other contaminated waste into biohazard bag. Spray contaminated surface again with disinfectant and wipe down. Finally, if bleach or other chlorine-based disinfectant was used, wipe up excess disinfectant and spray work surface and BSC walls with 70% Ethanol/isopropyl alcohol to remove residual disinfectant as bleach can be corrosive.
6. Autoclave all contaminated waste.
7. Wash hands with soap and water.

*For most spills, the best disinfectant is a 1:10 solution of household bleach, made fresh daily. Please consult the Office of Biological Safety if you have questions about the best disinfectant for your agent.

<p style="text-align: center;">LARGE BIOHAZARDOUS SPILL (UP TO ONE LITER IN VOLUME) OUTSIDE A BIOLOGICAL SAFETY CABINET (BSC)</p>
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1. **Alert co-workers, cover spill with paper towels (to prevent spill from migrating) and leave the lab area immediately.**
2. Close lab door and post lab with "**DO NOT ENTER**" sign.
3. If necessary, remove contaminated clothing and place into a biohazard bag, wash all contaminated body parts, and flush exposed mucous membranes with water or physiological saline solution.
4. Notify supervisor. If necessary, contact the Office of Biological Safety (4-6756, 4-7496, 4-2707) for additional guidance or assistance.
5. **Wait at least 20 minutes prior to re-entry (to allow aerosols to dissipate).**

6. Upon re-entry, don appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), i.e. lab coat, gloves and mucous membrane protection (safety glasses and/or face mask, gloves).
7. Carefully pour an appropriate disinfectant solution* onto the towel-soaked spill; care should be taken to minimize splashing. **LET STAND FOR AT LEAST 10 MINUTES.**
8. If broken glass or sharp objects are present, handle with tongs, forceps, brush and dustpan, or other mechanical means. Place broken glass in sharps container. Do not use your hands!
9. Wipe up spill/excess disinfectant working from the outside of the spill toward the center and place paper towels and other contaminated waste into biohazard bag. Spray contaminated surface again with disinfectant and wipe down. Finally, spray area with 70% Ethanol/isopropyl alcohol and wipe up to remove residual disinfectant.
10. Transfer all contaminated waste into an autoclave bag.
11. Wash and mop the entire area around the spill using an appropriate disinfectant.
12. Remove and discard PPE into an autoclave bag and autoclave waste.
13. Shower or wash hands with soap and water.

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SMALL LABORATORY EQUIPMENT

Liquid spills on small laboratory equipment shall be contained as follows:

1. Don appropriate PPE (lab coat, gloves, mucous membrane protection)
2. Drain excess liquid with paper towels
3. Immerse the contaminated equipment in a 10% bleach solution (made fresh daily) and allow 10 minutes contact time
4. Remove equipment from the decontaminant, blot off excess liquid with paper towels
5. Spray with a 70% ethanol/isopropyl alcohol solution, wipe clean to remove potentially corrosive bleach residue
6. Dispose of paper towels and gloves as biohazard waste; and

7. Wash hands with soap and water.

LARGE LABORATORY EQUIPMENT

Liquid spills on large laboratory equipment (e.g., centrifuge, incubator, autoclave) shall be contained as follows:

1. Drain excess liquid with paper towels
2. Spray the contaminated equipment in a 10% bleach solution (made fresh daily) including area surrounding the spill
3. Allow to 10 minutes contact time
4. Wipe with paper towels
5. Spray with a 70% ethanol/isopropyl alcohol solution, wipe clean
6. Dispose of paper towels and gloves as biohazard waste; and
7. Wash hands with soap and water.

Do NOT attempt to clean up a spill if any of the following conditions apply:

- If the spill is an unknown agent;
- The quantity spilled is greater than one liter (1L).

If you are UNABLE to deal with the spill, adhere to the following steps.

Incident Notification

1. Immediately upon discovery of an emergency incident related to the release of an infectious agent, notify the University of Chicago Police Department at extension **123** from a campus phone or **773-702-8181** to report the incident in campus buildings or Public Safety at **773-702-6262** for the Medical Center.
2. Evacuate the area and post lab with “**DO NOT ENTER**” sign.
3. The University Police shall immediately notify the “On-Call” Safety Officer.

Site Control

1. The site shall be controlled and maintained by the University of Chicago Police Department and/or Chicago Police Department personnel.
2. If the Police are not on site, the first arriving Safety Officer shall control access or appoint someone to control access until their arrival.
3. No one will be allowed to enter the area unless authorized.

For detailed information, refer to the [Emergency Response Plan for Hazardous Materials](#) or [Potentially Infectious Waste](#) policy.