



# Chemical Spills

## 1. Purpose:

Provide guidance on the containment, cleanup and reporting of chemical spills in the Chemistry Teaching Laboratory for the safety of lab personnel and lab users.

## 2. Scope:

Staff, Faculty, Postdoctoral Fellows, Graduate Students, Undergraduate Research Students, Volunteers and visitors working in the Chemistry Teaching Laboratory in the Department of Chemical and Physical Sciences (CPS).

## 3. Prerequisites:

EHS101: WHMIS and Lab Safety (or Annual Refresher EHS112)  
EHS002: Basic Health and Safety Awareness  
EHS820: Response to Small Laboratory Spills  
EHS601: Biosafety Training (Only when required)  
CPS Onboarding Training

\*Not an extensive list. Confirm with PI, Supervisor or Manager.

## 4. Introduction: *(Adapted from UofT EHS Office)*

A spill refers to the discharge of a pollutant that is abnormal in quality or quantity from a container or building into the natural environment. A spill can enter the environment through air, water or land. Examples in the chemistry lab include spills from broken bottles and excessive fumes being vented through a fume hood.

## 5. Responsibilities:

### 5.1 Chairs/Directors

It is the responsibility of Chairs or Directors to ensure employees are aware of these guidelines.

### 5.2 Principal Investigators (PI) and Lab Managers

Principal Investigators and Lab Managers must ensure that all laboratory users have the appropriate training to respond to chemical spills in their specific laboratory work space.

### 5.3 Employees, Student Lab Users and Lab Visitors

It is the responsibility of any University of Toronto lab user or lab visitor to adhere to the procedural requirements specified in this SOP.

## 6. Spill Kits (Adapted from UofT EHS Office)

### 6.1 Spill Kit Content

#### 6.1.1 Required Materials

 <p>Leak-proof Container</p>	 <p>Acid Absorbent Base Absorbent Organic Liquid Absorbent</p>	 <p>Neoprene or Nitrile Gloves</p>
 <p>Goggles</p>	 <p>Dustpan and Brush</p>	 <p>Disposable bags</p>
 <p>Chemical Waste Label</p>	 <p>Warning Signs</p>	 <p>Absorbent Pads</p>

#### 6.1.2 Optional Materials

- Drain Cover
- Caution Tape
- Shoe Covers
- pH indicator
- Absorbent socks
- Overalls
- Full face respirator
- Cartridges (multipurpose)
- Cartridges (Mercury)
- Aspirator bulb
- Medicine dropper
- Mercury sponge
- Mercury Vapor Suppressant

## 6.2 Spill Kit Locations

The following spill kits can be found in the Chemistry Teaching Labs. A sign at each location indicates the exact location of the spill kit. Floor plans showing the location of these kits can be found in Appendix A.

DV3007 Preparation Room - Small Spill Kit (by double doors)

DV3065C - Mercury Spill Accessories (below LCMSMS)

DV3065C - Small Spill Kit (under the sink)

DV3068 Tech Office - Large Spill Kit **(Can only be accessed by Laboratory Coordinators)**

DV3075D - Small Spill Kit (under the sink)

## 6.2 Maintaining Supplies in Spill Kits

Laboratory Coordinators should replenish the spill kits after use.

If a spill kit is used by a lab user other than a Lab Coordinator, please report to Danielle Carranza, Manager at [danielle.carranza@utoronto.ca](mailto:danielle.carranza@utoronto.ca) to replenish supplies and confirm that an incident report was submitted.

## 7. Procedures: *(Adapted from UofT EHS Office and UTSG Chemistry Department)*

*(See section 8 for mercury spills)*

### 7.1 Spills on Person

Attend to contaminated person. Report the incident to Manager, Teaching Laboratories Operations and to Environmental Health & Safety using the [Incident Report form](#).

#### 7.1.1 Spills on Body

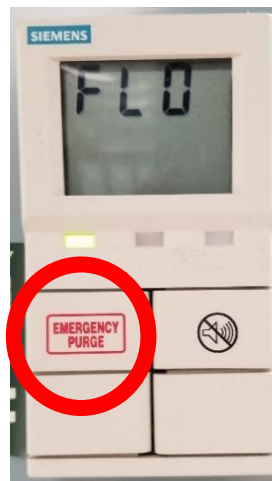
Remove contaminated clothing and wash affected area immediately for 15 minutes at sink or under safety shower. Consult SDS for additional medical attention. If in doubt about further treatment, call the EHS office at 4169784467 Monday to Friday during business hours. Call 911 outside these hours.

### 7.1.2 Chemicals in Eyes

Flush eyes at eyewash station immediately for 15 minutes after removing any contact lenses. Depending on the severity call 911, otherwise seek medical attention immediately.

## 7.2 Spills inside Fume hoods

1. Stop work immediately, unplug equipment and eliminate sources of ignition.
2. If possible and safe to do so, prevent the spill from going into the sink at the back of the fume hood. This can be accomplished by creating an obstruction or placing tissue paper around the sink.
3. Lower the sash and place a note indicating a spill. The note can be hand written or obtained from a spill kit.
4. Press the emergency purge button located on the fume hood alarm.



### 7.2.1 Volatile Chemicals

1. Allow the spill to evaporate completely before opening the sash.
2. Wipe down fume hood with soap and water if residue remains and remove the spill sign.

### 7.2.2 Non-volatile Chemicals and Corrosive

1. Bring the spill kit to the fume hood.
2. Consult Section 6.3 of SDS for Containment and Clean up particulars.
3. Ensure proper PPE: Lab coat, goggles, and chemical resistant gloves at minimum.
4. Retrieve necessary material from the spill kit.
5. Open sash to proper working height and place the absorbent on the spill working from the periphery inwards.
6. Place soaked absorbent into a waste bag. Leave the bag in the fume hood to vent for at least 24 hours.
7. Seal the bag and discard as chemical waste in appropriate green waste pail.
8. Remove spill sign from sash.

## 7.3 Spills outside fume hoods

### 7.3.1 Minor Spills

**Definition:** Indoor spills that do not pose immediate or significant threat to personal health and safety or the environment and can be cleaned up by lab personnel. All of the following conditions must be met for a spill to be considered minor.

- ✓ The responsible party is at the scene
- ✓ The material spilled is known and not toxic
- ✓ The quantity spilled less than 4 L
- ✓ There is no fire hazard present
- ✓ The spill is contained inside a building
- ✓ The material has little or no potential to reach the environment (e.g., via a drain, vent)
- ✓ The spill is not in a common area (e.g., a hallway)
- ✓ Medical attention is not required
- ✓ On-site personnel are trained, equipped (required PPE) and able (comfortable) to clean up spill

### Minor Spills Procedure:

1. Do not rush! Carefully plan cleanup. Consult section 6.3 of SDS to determine appropriate cleanup procedures for the material. The effects of a spill can be minimized with proper planning.
2. Ensure proper PPE: Lab coat, goggles, and chemical resistant gloves at minimum.
3. Retrieve necessary material from the spill kit.
4. Confine the spill to a small area. Do not allow the material to spread. Contain the size of spread of liquid spill by using appropriate absorbing material.
5. Carefully remove other materials, containers, equipment from path of the spill.
6. Sweep solids of low toxicity into a dust pan and place into container for disposal.
7. Dispose of all cleanup materials as hazardous waste. Allow soaked waste to vent in a fume hood for 24 hours. Waste must be properly packaged in a leak-proof container, sealed and labelled with a hazardous waste label.
8. After removal of spilled material, wash the area with warm soapy water to remove any remaining residue.
9. Report the incident to Manager, Teaching Laboratories Operations and to Environmental Health & Safety using the [Incident Report form](#).

### 7.3.2 Major Spills

**Definition:** A spill that fails one of the criteria to be classified as minor spill is considered major. Specifically, a spill is considered major **if ANY** of the following apply.

- ✓ The responsible party is unknown
- ✓ The material spilled is unknown, highly toxic, or presents a significant fire hazard
- ✓ Large (or undetermined) quantity was spilled
- ✓ Someone has been exposed to the material or requires first aid or medical attention
- ✓ The spill occurred outdoors
- ✓ The material has the potential to reach the environment (e.g. via a drain)
- ✓ The spill is in or affects a common area (e.g. hallway)
- ✓ On-site personnel are not trained or equipped (required PPE) to clean up spill (or not comfortable)
- ✓ You are unsure whether the spill should be considered *Minor* or *Major*

**Major Spills Procedure:** *(Taken Directly from UofT EHS Office)*

1. Evacuate immediate area. Call Environmental Protection Services at: 416.978.7000 on weekdays between 8:00am-4:00pm. After hours call Campus Safety 905.569.4333
2. State your name, location, chemical(s) involved, and the amount spilled.
3. Attend to any persons who may have been contaminated. Consult SDS for first aid information.
4. Wait in a safe area for the response team. Your knowledge of the area will assist the team.
5. Do not allow unauthorized personnel to enter the contaminated area.
6. Report the incident to Manager, Teaching Laboratories Operations and to Environmental Health & Safety using the [Incident Report form](#).

**8. Mercury Spills:** *(Taken directly from UofT EHS Office)*

**Mercury vapors are toxic. Mercury is a designated substance under Ministry of Labour Regulations.**

**Major Spill:**

1. For a Major spill call Environmental Protection Services (Hazardous Materials) at 416.978.7000 between 8:00am - 4:00pm on weekdays. After hours, call Campus Safety at 905- 569-4332
2. Seal off the area until assistance arrives.

**Minor Spill:**

1. Minor spills should be cleaned up immediately with an aspirator bulb, medicine dropper or a mercury sponge. Do not use household shop vacuum cleaner.
2. Place the mercury in a container and seal it. Contaminated items (e.g. broken thermometer, gloves, suction bulbs, etc.) should also be placed into the container.
3. Commercial mercury spill kits may be used if available in the laboratory.
4. Once larger mercury droplets are removed, wash the surface with mercury neutralizing solution such as 20% sodium sulphide or sodium thiosulphate.

5. If mercury has broken up into smaller globules, sprinkle with sulphur powder or commercial product and leave for several hours before cleanup. Attempt to prevent the spread of mercury outside of the contaminated area.
6. Dispose of all cleanup materials as hazardous waste. Waste must be properly packaged, sealed and labelled with hazardous waste label. Refer to Chemical Waste Disposal Procedures.
7. Call Environmental Protection Services (Hazardous Materials) at 416.946.3473 for collection and disposal of the waste.
8. Report the incident to Manager, Teaching Laboratories Operations and to Environmental Health & Safety using the [Incident Report form](#).

## **9. Polychlorinated Biphenyl (PCB) Spills** *(Parts taken directly and parts adapted from UofT EHS Office)*

A PCB material is legally defined as any monochlorinated or polychlorinated biphenyl or any mixture that contains one or more of them. This includes equipment, solids [including empty containers] and contaminated liquids. The handling of PCB-contaminated materials requires special consideration. Many provincial and federal environmental requirements apply. It is important for the University to recognize and implement appropriate handling requirements for such material.

### **9.1 Major Spills:**

**Definition:** PCB spills are considered major if one of the following applies:

- the spill is large [ $> 1$  litre of liquid or 1 kg of solid PCB-contaminated material]
- the concentration of the PCBs is  $> 5000$  ppm
- **Any** PCB material has spilled outside [into the “natural environment”]
- the hazard from a spill exceeds the capabilities for cleanup in the work area
- any doubts exist about the proper procedures

#### **Major Spill Procedure:**

1. Evacuate the immediate area.
2. **Immediately** contact the Environmental Protection Services at 416.978.7000. After hours call the University Police at 416.978.2222.
3. State the location, extent of the spill and that the spill involves PCBs.
4. Await the arrival of the response team in a safe area.



5. Attend to any persons who may have been contaminated.
6. Do not allow unauthorized personnel to enter the contaminated area.

### **9.1 Minor Spills:**

**Definition:** PCB spills are considered minor spills if all of the following apply:

- the spill is small [ $> 1$  litre of liquid or 1 kg of solid PCB-contaminated material]
- the concentration of the PCBs is  $< 5000$  ppm
- **No** PCB material has spilled outside [into the “natural environment”]
- the hazard from a spill does not exceed the capabilities for cleanup in the work area
- Lab personnel have no doubts about the proper clean-up procedure and are comfortable doing so

#### **Minor Spill Procedure:**

##### **Personal Protective Equipment:**

- Chemical splash goggles
- Respirator with organic cartridges
- Skin Protection
- Neoprene gloves
- Disposable coveralls
- Rubber boots

##### **For Solid Spills:**

1. Confine the spill to a small area; do not allow the material to spread.
2. Shovel or scoop material into steel drum or other suitable container.
3. Wipe contaminated area with detergent.
4. Vent area to prevent accumulation of vapours.

##### **For Liquid Spills:**

1. Confine the spill to a small area; do not allow the material to spread.
2. Absorb liquid with vermiculite, sand or other inert absorbent.
3. Shovel or scoop material into steel drum or other suitable container.
4. Wipe contaminated area with detergent.
5. Vent area to prevent accumulation of vapours.

**All contaminated materials including clothing, gloves, to be treated as PCB waste [per O. Reg. 362].** Contact Environmental Protection Services AT 416.978.7000 for disposal of materials.

## **Post-Spill Monitoring**

Contact Environmental Protection Services at 416.978.7000 to arrange for lab analysis of cleanup. Assistance in cleanups also provided.

## **9. Resources:**

<https://ehs.utoronto.ca/report-an-incident/emergency-procedures/chemical-spill-procedures/>

<https://ehs.utoronto.ca/report-an-incident/emergency-procedures/mercury-spill-procedures/>

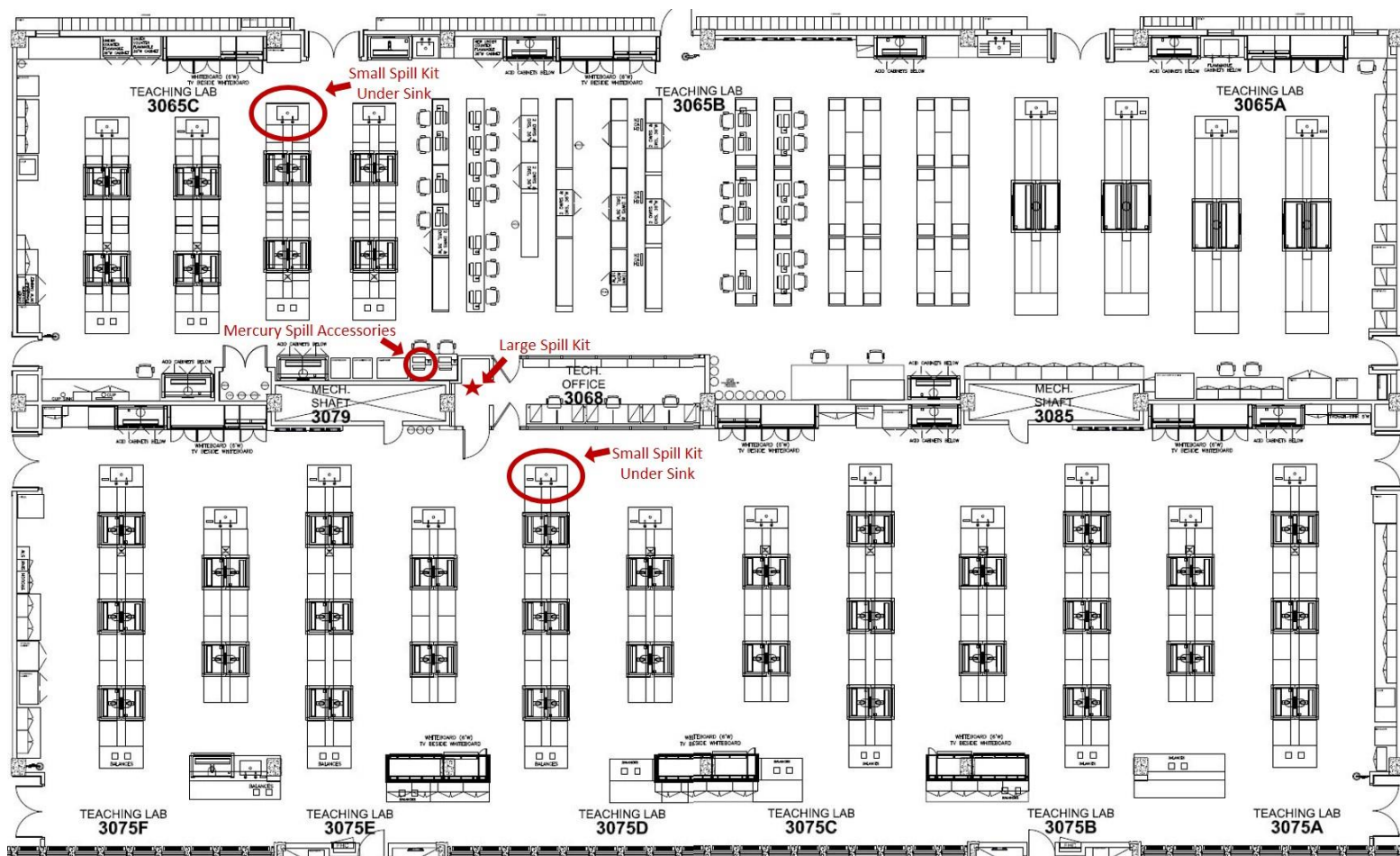
<https://www.chemistry.utoronto.ca/sites/www.chemistry.utoronto.ca/files/LM-SOP-06%20-V01-%20Chemical%20Spills%20%2811-01-2019%29.pdf>

<https://ehs.utoronto.ca/our-services/environmental-protection-services/pcb-disposal/>

# APPENDIX A

## Locations of Spill Kits

Chemistry Teaching Lab DV3065, DV3068, DV3075



# Chemistry Preparation Room DV3007

