

# Hazardous Chemical Spill Response

Policy 303.16

## 1 Introduction

1.1 When a hazardous chemical is released, appropriate and immediate response can prevent serious injury to students and employees. In the event of a spill or other release of hazardous materials, all persons on Appalachian State University premises should be prepared to act appropriately.

## 2 Scope

2.1 On-the-job Hazard Communication or Chemical Hygiene training, which is required by OSHA, is the main way for employees to learn how to recognize and respond to chemical releases or spills. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) can also provide direction. Department or Area Supervisors are responsible for providing Hazard Communication or Chemical Hygiene training, for ensuring that MSDSs are available, and for ensuring spill response supplies are readily available in the area where spills may occur.

2.2 Employees from other ASU departments (for example Physical Plant, University Police, etc.) should never be requested to clean up a spill of hazardous materials for which they have not received Hazard Communication or Chemical Hygiene training.

2.3 For assistance with developing Hazard Communication or Chemical Hygiene training, obtaining or understanding MSDSs, and selecting spill response supplies, Supervisors may contact the Industrial Hygienist at 262-6838 or [cavanaughmm@appstate.edu](mailto:cavanaughmm@appstate.edu).

## 3 Definitions

### 3.1 Chemical Spill

A chemical spill is any unplanned release of a chemical, whether it is a solid, liquid, or gas. A chemical is hazardous if it would cause harm to humans or the environment if not properly controlled.

### 3.2 Minor Chemical Spill

A minor chemical spill is a spill that does not present an immediate hazard (health, fire, explosion, etc.) to persons in the area and which can be handled safely without the use of respiratory protection or specially trained emergency response personnel. ASU defines other spills as major chemical spills.

## 4 Policy and Procedure Statements

### 4.1 Minor Spill

4.1.1 In the event of a minor spill:

1. Alert people in immediate area of spill.
2. Wear protective equipment as needed (safety goggles, gloves, etc.).
3. Avoid breathing vapors from spill. Increase area ventilation by opening windows and turning on any hoods in the room.
4. Confine spill to small area with absorbent materials. Try to prevent spill from entering waterways or floor drains.
5. For inorganic acids and bases, use appropriate spill kit to neutralize and absorb. For other chemicals, use appropriate kit or contain spill with absorbent pigs or socks, vermiculite, dry sand, diatomaceous earth (i.e. plain kitty litter), or paper towels.
6. Collect spill residue, place in container, label the container, and call Jim Rice 262-3190 ext 108 or [ricejh@appstate.edu](mailto:ricejh@appstate.edu) for disposal information.
7. Clean spill area with water or as directed in the MSDS.
8. As soon as possible, notify the Occupational Safety and Health Office at 262-6838 or [cavanaughmm@appstate.edu](mailto:cavanaughmm@appstate.edu). Do not delay spill cleanup to contact the Safety & WC Office.
9. In the unlikely event of injury or illness from responding to the spill, follow the normal Workers' Compensation incident and reporting process.

### 4.2 Major Spill

#### 4.2.1 In the event of a major spill of hazardous material:

1. Evacuate and immediately call University Police at 8000. If possible, provide the following information:
  1. Your name and phone number;
  2. Identity and amount of spilled material;
  3. Location of spill (building, room, location in room);
  4. Time of spill; and
  5. Whether anyone in the area is having symptoms that may require medical help.
2. In case of personal contamination, remove affected clothing and flush contaminated skin with water for at least fifteen minutes. Seek medical attention immediately. Follow the usual ASU Workers' Compensation process for seeking medical attention and reporting.
3. Alert people in the surrounding area to evacuate.
4. If you can do so without placing yourself or others at risk, turn off ignition and heat sources, maintain fume hood ventilation (if any), and open windows (if any) to increase ventilation.
5. Close doors to affected area once the area is evacuated.
6. Have person(s) knowledgeable of the incident and the work area assist emergency personnel upon arrival.

4.2.2 As soon as possible, notify the Occupational Safety and Health Office at 262-6838 or [cavanaughmm@appstate.edu](mailto:cavanaughmm@appstate.edu). Do not delay spill response to contact the Occupational Safety and Health Office.

## **5 Additional References**

## **6 Authority**

## **7 Contact Information**

## **8 Original Effective Date**

August 30, 2006

## **9 Revision Dates**