

## CHEMICAL SPILLS AND FUMES

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### Immediate Response

1. Classify the type of spill that has occurred. There are two types – complicated and simple spills. If the spill meets any of the following conditions, it is complex:
  - a. A person is injured,
  - b. The identity of the chemical is unknown,
  - c. Multiple chemicals are involved,
  - d. The spill occurs in a public space, such as a corridor,
  - e. The spill has the potential to spread to other parts of the building (i.e., through vents, etc),
  - f. The clean up procedures are not known or appropriate materials are not readily available, or
  - g. The spill may endanger the environment by reaching a waterway or outside ground.
  
2. If the spill is a complicated spill:
  - a. **Evacuate the area.** Leave the spill area and alert others to do the same. Without endangering yourself: remove victims to fresh air, remove contaminated clothing, and flush contaminated skin with cold water for a minimum of 15 minutes. If anyone is injured, call **9-911** immediately. If the building recycles air back into the building, it may be necessary to evacuate the building completely.
  - b. **Confine the spill area.** Close doors and windows and isolate the area.
  - c. **Report the spill.** From a safe place, call METCAD (9-911). Report that this is a complex spill at UIUC and give the chemical's name (if known), the quantity of material spilled (if know), spill location (building and room number), extent of injuries, whether a fire is involved, and your name and phone number. Call the University Librarian's Office (3-0790).
  - d. **Secure the area.** Until emergency personnel arrive, block off the area and prevent others from entering. Post personnel by commonly used entrances and direct individuals to use other routes. Arrange for someone to meet the emergency personnel at the street side of the building and provide them with any pertinent information.
  - e. **Clean up the spill.** After the Fire Department has controlled the spill, consult with the Chemical Safety Section of the Division of Environmental Health and Safety (3-2755) to determine how to clean up the spill. In some cases, the campus will be able to do this. In others, a contractor may need to be hired.
  
6. If the spill is a simple spill, contact the University Librarian's Office (3-0790), explain the situation and ask for assistance from O&M to deal with the clean-up.

### General Information

1. Toxic fumes may emanate from mechanical equipment, stored chemicals and cleansers, construction products, such as floor sealants and welding torches, fumigation, and other sources.
2. Toxic fumes may cause dizziness, headache, and nausea. Contact with chemicals or inhalation of fumes may result in chemical burns and allergic reactions. Extended exposure can result in weakness and even unconsciousness, cancer, blindness, and death.
3. If someone has been overcome by toxic fumes, get help from others before you decide to rescue or move the victim. You could be overcome by fumes in attempting rescue.