

Chemical / Hazardous Waste Spill

Hazardous materials incidents can occur unexpectedly and may involve the release of chemicals, biological materials, fuels, gases, or other substances that pose a risk to human health, safety, or the environment. These incidents can range from a small laboratory spill to a significant hazardous materials emergency requiring evacuation and specialized response.

The Master's University Emergency Management Department, in coordination with Campus Safety, Facilities Services, and local emergency response agencies, is prepared to respond to hazardous materials incidents. Your safety depends on recognizing hazards, avoiding exposure, and promptly reporting emergencies.

If You Discover a Chemical Spill or Hazardous Materials Release

Assess the Situation

If the spill is small, contained, and you have been specifically trained to manage it, follow established laboratory or workplace procedures.

If the spill involves an unknown substance, poses a health risk, is spreading, or you are uncertain how to respond:

- Stop what you are doing immediately.
- Move away from the affected area.
- Warn others to stay away.
- Do not attempt to clean up the spill.
- Avoid breathing vapors, fumes, smoke, or dust.
- Prevent others from entering the area if it is safe to do so.

Evacuate the Area

If instructed to evacuate or if conditions appear unsafe:

- Leave the area immediately.
- Assist others if you can do so safely.
- Close doors as you leave to help contain the hazard.
- Move uphill and upwind from the affected area if outdoors.
- Proceed to the designated assembly area or location directed by emergency personnel.
- Do not re-enter the affected area until authorized.

Shelter-in-Place

In some hazardous materials emergencies, remaining indoors may provide the safest protection.

If instructed to shelter-in-place:

- Move inside the nearest building.
- Close and secure all doors and windows.
- Turn off fans, air conditioners, and ventilation systems if instructed.
- Move to an interior room away from windows and exterior doors.
- Monitor Mustang Alert and official university communications.
- Remain sheltered until emergency officials provide further instructions.

If You Have Been Exposed

If you believe you have been exposed to a hazardous substance:

- Leave the contaminated area immediately.
- Notify emergency responders and Campus Safety.
- Remove contaminated clothing if directed to do so.
- Flush exposed skin or eyes with water for at least 15 minutes if appropriate and safe.
- Seek immediate medical attention.
- Do not consume food or beverages until cleared by medical personnel.

Contact Emergency Responders

Immediately report all hazardous materials incidents.

- Call 911 if there is a threat to life, health, or safety.
- Contact TMU Campus Safety at (661) 713-7561.
- Provide:
 - Your location
 - The type of material involved (if known)
 - The size and extent of the spill
 - Whether anyone has been exposed or injured
 - Any unusual odors, smoke, or visible reactions

When Emergency Responders Arrive

- Remain calm.
- Follow all instructions from Campus Safety, fire personnel, law enforcement, and hazardous materials responders.
- Provide any information you have regarding the incident.
- Do not return to the affected area until it has been declared safe.

Prevention and Preparedness

You can help prevent hazardous materials incidents by:

- Following all laboratory and workplace safety procedures.
- Properly storing and labeling chemicals.
- Using required personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Reporting unsafe conditions immediately.
- Participating in required safety training and drills.

After the Incident

- Follow instructions regarding decontamination or medical evaluation.
- Avoid entering restricted areas.
- Monitor official university communications for updates.
- Seek medical attention if symptoms develop after exposure.
- Participate in after-action reporting if requested.

Remember: If you encounter a hazardous material or chemical spill, do not attempt to clean it up unless you are specifically trained and authorized to do so. Evacuate, isolate, and report the hazard immediately.

