Office of Risk Management

Spill Response

Although one may take every measure to prevent a spill or loss of containment, unplanned events can and do occur. When responding to such situations, it is important to minimize the risk of exposure. This can be addressed by being aware of the risks associated with the agent, and ensuring a prompt and appropriate clean-up. In order to achieve the above mentioned goals it is important to have measures firmly in place which address the event of spills or a release of biological agents. The development of these measures involves the identification and evaluation of the following elements:

- The Spill Response Plan
- Risk Assessment
- Spill Kits
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Reporting
- General Guidelines
- Clean-up Procedures for:

  i) spills occurring in a contained environment
  i) spills occurring in an open environment (lab/ hallway)
  iii) spills of blood and bodily fluids

- Spill Response Plan Template

Spill Response Plan

A well established, well thought out spill response plan is the key to successfully managing biological spills.

It is the responsibility of the Principle Investigator to ensure an appropriate spill response plan for their lab exists. Each individual must ensure they are familiar with all aspects of the spill response plan and the P.I.s should confirm this understanding. An effective spill response procedure should include the following;

- Names and contact information of individuals to be contacted in the event of a spill.
- Evacuation plans for the room or building.
- Instructions for containment and clean-up of the spilled material
- Inventory of spill kit equipment and personal protective equipment.
- Means for proper decontamination and disposal of cleanup materials and contaminated items (i.e. clothing or equipment).

Risk Assessment

It is of utmost importance to know the agents you are working with. Suppliers and or/MSDS sheets can provide detailed information on the characteristics of the agent as well as effective containment and clean-up procedures. Section VIII of Health Canada's MSDSs addresses the specific spill