SAFETY UNLIMITED, Inc.

Weekly Safety Meeting

Your Safety Is Our Business®

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Spill Prevention and Response

Spills in the workplace cause hazards from slips and falls, exposure to the spilled material, and accidental release into the environment. Know the proper storage, handling, use, and spill response for the materials in your workplace.

Read the safety data sheets (SDSs) that explain correct spill response techniques, cleanup methods, and disposal. Know when it is safe for you to clean up a spill yourself and when to call your supervisor, the company spill response team, or an outside resource for assistance. Know what equipment you will need to clean up properly. Use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for spill response such as gloves, safety glasses, coveralls, and/or respirators. Know where your spill response materials are located at work and how to use them.

In order to prevent spills, use good storage techniques. Place materials in compatible groups and appropriate storage containers. Securely seal materials before storage. Keep materials sheltered and in the proper environment. Post material storage areas with spill response procedures and emergency phone numbers.

If you cause a spill or find a spill, immediately notify your supervisor and coworkers in the area. If the spilled material is flammable or volatile, shut off flame sources and air the area out if it is safe to do so. If possible, protect floor drains or outside access areas from the spill. Cordon off the spill area to prevent further access and potential exposures. If you or a coworker were exposed to the spilled material, use emergency eye washes or showers for at least 15 minutes, get to a well-ventilated area, and seek medical attention if needed.

Prevention:

- Inspect containers regularly for leaks, corrosion, worn seals.
- Handle containers with care, removing only as much of their contents as you need at a time. Close containers after using them.
- Find out how to dispose of chemicals you no longer need.

Getting Ready:

Yes, unfortunately spills do happen, and there are certain preparations you should make:

- Be familiar with your company's emergency response plan, evacuation routes for your area, and your assigned role in a spill situation.
- Make sure that the phone number of the emergency coordinator to whom you must report a spill is clearly posted.
- Check labels and SDSs of chemicals you use.
    - You should know the potential hazards--fire, explosion, reactivity, toxicity--that might be present in a spill.

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When a Spill Happens:

If a spill occurs, try to avoid touching it, walking in it, or breathing it, whether it has an odor or not. Report a spill or leak immediately. Be prepared to tell what is leaking or spilled, where it is, the size of the spill or the leak's rate of flow. You may be asked to clean up a small spill, following company policy and SDS procedures. For larger spills, your response depends on your assigned responsibility. Unless you are on the spill response team, you should evacuate the area according to your assigned route, warn others to leave and stay out of the area until you are told it's safe to return.

Containing the Spill:

For all but the smallest spills, the spill response team will step in with procedures and equipment for containing the spill and protecting workers and the environment from exposure to the substance. Team members must wear protective clothing and, perhaps, respirators. If the spill is flammable, they will avoid using tools that spark. Corrosion-resistant tools must be used with corrosive substances.

The first step is to try to stop the leak or spill by securing a valve, closing a pump, plugging a hole in a leaking container or shifting a container to stop the flow. A barrel may be placed under the leak; or the leaking container may be placed in a larger container or a bag.

Meanwhile, team members work to keep the spill from spreading, putting dikes around drains or reactive chemicals. Once the spill is under control, workers can use a variety of cleanup methods. Absorbent pillows, pads, or substances such as clay and vermiculite absorb small spills. Workers may use a vacuum truck or a specially designed squeegee to move the spill to a chemical drain or to special drums for disposal.

Afterward:

Following cleanup of a spill, clothing and equipment involved in the cleanup must be decontaminated according to company procedures. OSHA regulations require each spill to be reviewed and reported. You can do your part by discussing with your co-workers how the spill could have been prevented and what steps might be taken to keep such spills from happening in the future. By learning from accidents, you can help prevent them.

A spill…a slip…a hospital trip!!

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Safety Meeting Sign-In Sheet

Supervisor:	*Subject:*
Location:	*Date:*
Conducted By:	*Trainer Signature:*

Name (print clearly)	Signature	Comments / Safety Concerns / Training Requests