



EHS Bulletin

February 2021

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Spill Kits - Are an Ounce of Prevention

Making preparations before an accident occurs decreases the possibility and significances of a spill and in the event of a release, a well-prepared spill kit will minimize the environment and economic impact of the spill.

Laboratories should have a chemical spill kit readily available at or near the point of generation, to ensure the quick, easy and effective cleanup of a spill. Spill kits should be stored in an accessible area where all laboratory personnel know the location and contents of the kit.

Specific contents will vary, however spill kits should consist of:

- Instructions and inventory - list of items available and emergency preparedness plan.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - gloves, goggles, Tyvek suit and shoe coverings.
- Absorbents - socks, mats, pillows or loose absorbents.
- Neutralizing materials - acidic or caustic neutralizers.
- Equipment necessary for the collection of the spill - scoops, towels and brushes.
- Container for disposal - the spill kit container or appropriate bag.



Not Sure What You Need?

Due to the variety of materials in laboratories, no one spill kit will cover all areas. Completing an assessment of laboratory specific needs will make purchasing or developing a spill kit effective. Spill kits should be chosen based on the types and amounts of chemicals or waste being used or produced. When completing the assessment refer to the chemical inventory, waste streams, Safety Data Sheets (SDSs) and emergency response guide to answer the following questions:

- What PPE is required for the material in the laboratory?
 - Refer to SDS's.
- What types and quantities of material would need absorbed?
- Are there any drains in the area that need to be protected in the event of a spill?
 - Add appropriate booms or drain covers to kit.
- Will the material require neutralization before it can be safely cleaned up?
- What equipment is necessary for collection?
 - Suction pump, disposable pipettes, brooms, scoops, towels and brushes.
- What type of waste container is appropriate?
 - Glass, plastic or metal



Please remember to properly label all spill kits and at a minimum inspect each spill kit annually to determine competency and inventory of the kits supplies. Replace spill kit supplies after each use and update the spill kits if materials use in the laboratory changes.

For more information or questions on spill kits please email EHS at ehs@okstate.edu or call (405) 744-7241.

The 411 on Fire Sprinklers

What is a fire sprinkler system and why are they installed in buildings?

A fire sprinkler system consists of heat activated heads, piping and a water supply. The only component that is seen is the sprinkler head. The sprinkler head is a heat sensing device that will activate when it senses a significant rise in temperature. Unlike the movies, only the sprinkler head closest to the temperature rise will activate to control or extinguish the fire.



Why is it important that fire sprinklers be installed?

Fire sprinklers have been widely recognized as the single most effective method of fighting fire in their early stages to prevent severe injury to people and/or damage to property. Early activation controls the intense heat and toxic smoke given off by the fire and allows building occupants a better chance at evacuating the building. The National Fire Protection Agency has determined that “When sprinklers are present, the chances of dying in a fire and the average property loss per fire are both cut by one-half to two-thirds, compared to fires where sprinklers are not present”.

How individuals can help ensure that the fire sprinklers operate properly:

- Do not tamper with the system by hanging clothes or decorations from the sprinkler heads. These actions could damage or activate the sprinkler head causing thousands of dollars of unnecessary damage.
- Ensure there is more than 18 inches of clearance between the sprinkler head and any items placed or installed around them, this will allow for the proper operation.
- Report any issues or concerns in regards to fire sprinklers.

For additional information on fire sprinklers, please see the links below:

American Fire Sprinkler Association: [Automatic Fire Sprinklers](#)

National Fire Protection Agency: [U.S. Experience with Sprinklers](#)

Current Events

Bloodborne Pathogen Training

2nd Tuesday of the month, 9-10 am or 2-3 pm
EHS Conference Room, 003UHS
Required annually for members under OSHA's standard.
Registration: Email name to chemicalsafety@okstate.edu

Respiratory Protection

1st Tuesday of the month, 8:30-9:30 am
FM North Building, Room 101c
Required annually for members who wear respiratory protection.
Registration: Email name to ohsp@okstate.edu

Fire Safety w/ Hands-on Extinguisher Training

2nd Friday of the month, 9:00-10:00 am
EHS Conference Room, 003UHS
Come join us for fire safety education featuring the BullsEye laser training device.
Registration: Email name to ohsp@okstate.edu

Monthly Employee Training

3rd Thursday of the month, 9:30-11:30 am
EHS Conference Room, 003UHS
Topics: Hazcom; Fire Safety; Slips, Trips, and Falls; Office Safety; and Back Safety
Registration: Email name to ohsp@okstate.edu

For more information or questions about fire sprinkler systems, please email EHS at fls@okstate.edu or call (405) 744-7241.