Binghamton University

Physical Facilities

Sewage Spill Response Procedures

1. Customer Service Center receives notification that a sanitary sewage spill has occurred.
   a. CSC will notify Plumbing department and Custodial Services immediately.
2. Plumbing supervisor or shift supervisor should decide size.
3. Small Spill – A spill that is contained within one non-public room and does not compromise a porous wall (sheetrock). The following should be notified as appropriate:
   a. Building Services Manager
   b. Assistant Director of Operations
4. Large Spill - A spill that goes into any public area, multiple rooms, or comprises a porous wall (sheetrock). The following should be notified as appropriate:
   a. Building Services Manager
   b. Assistant Director of Operations
   c. Director of Operations & Construction
   d. Environmental Health and Safety
   e. University Police
5. Restrict area against unauthorized entry. Caution tape off area.
6. Investigate the potential for electrical hazards and de-energize electrical circuits. Contact CSC or Monitor Board as necessary.
7. Plumbers determine if the flow has stopped. If not, take measures to stop the flow from upstream.
8. Review Section on Good Hygiene, of this document before beginning any clean-up activities.
9. Review section on Hazard Assessment. Acquire all appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as specified in this document, and as suggested by the Supervisor.
10. Acquire necessary equipment and supplies. Prepare disinfectant (following manufactures specifications) or bleach (in a 1:10 ratio). Consider staging area, can it be part of secured area or need to enlarge it.
11. Put on appropriate PPE.
12. Remove standing liquid with shop vac. Collect and dispose into an active sewer system.
13. Remove all furniture, loose rugs, and so on from the area.
14. Saturated wall-to-wall carpeting (and the pad) usually cannot be adequately cleaned. They should be removed, wrapped in plastic, and taken to a transfer station or sanitary landfill.

15. All hard surfaces, such as linoleum, hardwood floors, concrete, wood moldings, wood, and metal furniture, etc. should be thoroughly cleaned with hot water and disinfectant or bleach**.** Let the surface air-dry.

16. Clean sinks, rinse basins, and/or other plumbing fixtures that have had sewage back-up, with disinfectant or bleach.

17. If internal to a building, increase air circulation to reduce odors and mold growth. Open all windows and doors. The use of fans and dehumidifiers should also be used to speed the drying process.

18. Following complete clean-up of the contaminated area, wash your hands thoroughly and launder clothes separately. Disinfect "clean-up" mops, brooms, shovels, tongs, brushes, etc. with disinfectant or bleach.

19. If the spill came in contact with a porous wall (sheetrock), refer to the recommended procedure for a porous wall.

20. **Please Note:** If the potential exists that the repairs & clean-up cannot be completed in a timely fashion, the Incident Management Team will need to be activated in order to re-locate and/or re-schedule staff and activities.

Good Hygiene

Do not touch sewage with bare hands. If you need to remove it, wear waterproof gloves and use an instrument such as tongs or a spade for picking it up.

Do not smoke, eat, drink, apply lip treatments, or chew gum while cleaning up sewage.

Reduce exposure by keeping those who are not properly protected from coming in contact with the material.

Clean everything, including clothes, tools, and footwear, that came in contact with the sewage. Use Fullsan or Bleach to wash down contaminated surfaces and "clean-up" equipment.

Wash your hands thoroughly even if you were wearing gloves the whole time. Use plenty of soap, scrub for at least 30 seconds, and rinse thoroughly with warm water. The New York Department of Health states: "frequent, routine hand washing is the **most important safeguard** in preventing infection by agents present in sewage."

Exposure and First Aid

If you believe that sewage has come into direct contact with your eyes, mouth, ears, nose, or a cut, abrasion, puncture, etc. You should immediately, and thoroughly, wash the exposed area with copious amounts of soap and water. Report the incident to your supervisor for further evaluation.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) & Clean-up Equipment

• Neoprene gloves
• Face Shield
• Long Pants or Tyvek Suits
• Buckets & Mops
• Wet/Dry Vacuum
• Fullsan or Bleach

• Protective Boots
• Tongs
• Sprayer(s)
• Fans/blowers (as necessary)
• Shovels

Porous Wall

If a sewage spill has compromised a porous wall (sheetrock or other porous wall material), follow the following procedure:

1. Contact asbestos coordinator for determination of asbestos in wall.
2. Test wall with moisture meter.
3. Remove wall material 4" above wet line. Bag contaminated material and dispose of properly.
4. Clean and disinfect as necessary.
5. Allow wall area to air dry with the use of air movers and dehumidifiers.
6. When dry as tested with moisture meter, repair wall.

Management Considerations

1. Isolate the area from the general public using barrier tape.
2. Determine need for more employees and resources
3. Determine source/cause of sewer backup
4. Determine exposure level of the area around the sewer backup and to the campus storm water system.
5. Protect storm drain inlets by using drain mats
6. Develop a mitigation plan for removing any potential contamination in the general area of the sewer backup and for decontaminating the campus storm water system.
7. Implement mitigation plan

This is the general process but each incident may have additional steps required depending on the scope. We have not included any steps regarding internal communications/notifications or any local agency requirements (i.e. public works) that you may have. Even though this is primarily a Physical Facilities issue in terms of response, there are still regulatory issues that make it important for EHS to be involved in the process.