

# Guidelines for Handling Pesticide Spills

## General Guidelines

- Always keep spill cleanup materials on hand. Cleanup materials should include:
  - Slikwik<sup>R</sup> or another commercially available absorbent (activated charcoal, absorptive clay, kitty litter, vermiculite, sawdust, etc.),
  - a scoop or other means to apply loose absorbent,
  - a small brush and dustpan for cleaning up absorbed spills,
  - a bucket or other container to contain absorbed spills,
  - sweeping compound to apply to dry spills, and
  - personal protective equipment.
- In the event that a spill gets on someone:
  1. **Wash it off IMMEDIATELY!** Remove any clothes that cover the contaminated area. Wash for at least 15 minutes or until medical assistance arrives.
  2. Call 911 if necessary.
- **Always call for emergency assistance if you feel unable to deal with a spill!**

## In the event of a spill inside a Pesticide Storage Facility:

1. Always protect yourself and others first. Only those people necessary to handle or cleanup the spill should remain in the area.
2. Don't expose yourself unnecessarily to the spilled product; make sure you are properly protected. Wear all the personal protective equipment required by the label.
3. If at all possible, shut off the source of the spill (right a leaking container, turn off a valve, etc.).
4. Contain the spill as much as possible by spreading a berm around the spill or otherwise blocking its spread.
5. Turn off the sump pump. Try to keep liquid concentrates from reaching the sump, or, more importantly, the wastewater tanks.
6. If at all possible, recover as much concentrate as you can.
7. If you can manage the spill yourself, clean it up.

For liquid spills: Apply enough absorbent to soak up most of the liquid. Then, sweep or shovel into a drum or other container for disposal as hazardous waste.

For spills of dusts, granulars or powders: Sweep or shovel it directly into a drum or other container, after recovering as much as is practical. A sweeping compound helps to contain the dust.

8. If possible, trace outside the spill area with chalk before rinsing. When the spill area is clearly defined, it will help to minimize the amount of rinsewater used.
9. Rinse any residue and send it to the sump
10. Record any significant spills in the wastewater log and report them to the manager of the Facility.

### In the event of a spill inside a building other than a Pesticide Storage Facility:

1. Always protect yourself and others first. Only those people necessary to handle or cleanup the spill should remain in the area.
2. Don't expose yourself unnecessarily to the spilled product; make sure you are properly protected. Wear all the personal protective equipment required by the label.
3. If at all possible, shut off the source of the spill (right a leaking container, turn off a valve, etc.).
4. Contain the spill as much as possible by spreading a berm around the spill or otherwise blocking its spread.
5. If at all possible, recover as much concentrate as you can.
6. If you can manage the spill yourself, clean it up.

For liquid spills: Apply enough absorbent to soak up most of the liquid. Then, sweep or shovel into a drum or other container for disposal as hazardous waste.

For spills of dusts, granulars or powders: Sweep or shovel it directly into a drum or other container, after recovering as much as is practical. A sweeping compound helps to contain the dust.

7. If possible, trace outside the spill area with chalk before rinsing. When the spill area is clearly defined, it will help to minimize the amount of rinsewater used.
8. Rinse any residue, using a decontamination agent recommended for that pesticide. Consult the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) or the manufacturer. Collect the rinseate for disposal as hazardous waste.
9. Report the spill to the manager of the building. Have the waste picked up by EH&S.

### In the event of a spill in the environment:

1. Always protect yourself and others first.
2. Don't expose yourself unnecessarily to the spilled product; make sure you are properly protected. Wear all the personal protective equipment required by the label.
3. If at all possible, shut off the source of the spill.
4. Contain the spill - prevent spread by using absorbents.
5. Be aware that spills of hazardous materials into the environment may have to be reported to local and/or state authorities. Seek assistance:

- For a hazardous materials spill on campus without any personal injuries: Call 5- 1111. If anyone is injured: Call 911. The Cornell Police will involve Environmental Health and Safety and CALS Occupational and Environmental Health as needed.
- For a hazardous materials spill off-campus : Call 911 or other local emergency number. The emergency responders may or may not contact a regulatory agency. You must contact Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S, 607-255-8200) and CALS Occupational and Environmental Health (OEH, 607-255-0485) as soon as possible, during normal business hours. If the spill occurs after business hours, contact the Cornell Police (607-255-1111). If a regulatory agency was involved at the time of the spill, be prepared to provide EH&S or the Cornell Police with the spill number, the regulatory agency contacted, and the time of contact. If a regulatory agency was not involved at the time of the spill, contact EH&S or the Cornell Police as soon as possible and be prepared to provide your name; the time, location and nature of the incident; the hazardous material(s) involved; the amount(s) spilled; what was done to contain or control the spill; and any environmental impacts.