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There is ALWAYS a chance that a spill or leak can happen when chemicals are used in the workplace. The Accidental Release Measures section of the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) provides general guidance on the actions to take in case of a spill or leak. The employer is responsible to develop procedures that are appropriate for the workplace and conditions of use of a product. The recommended approach is to develop procedures for Prevention, Preparedness and Response.

Prevention is Best
EVALUATE ways to minimize potential spills in the storage area, when transported in the workplace, during transfers to other containers, and during use.
PROTECT containers and pipes from damage.
INSPECT containers and pipes regularly for leaks, corrosion or signs of degradation.
USE spill trays and secondary containment where leaks may occur.
BE AWARE of any instability or incompatibility which may lead a container to break or overflow.
USE only as much of the material as you need at a time.
USE pumps or other mechanical devices instead of pouring directly into a container.
BOND and GROUND containers of flammable liquids.
CLOSE containers after using them.
DISPOSE of chemicals if no longer needed.
MAINTAIN good housekeeping and minimize clutter.

Preparedness
Be prepared and have appropriate spill equipment and procedures in place.
EVALUATE the hazards (e.g. fire, health, reactivity) of the materials you work with and be PREPARED to properly and safely clean up a small spill or leak.
ENSURE appropriate spill kits, tools and personal protective equipment are readily available.
ENSURE that engineering controls are adequate and are working properly.
POST emergency response contact numbers and information in a visible location.
PRACTICE your spill response plan.

Response – When a Spill or Leak Occurs …
KNOW when to initiate the emergency response plan.
IF YOU CANNOT RESPOND SAFELY, then evacuate the area and restrict access.
CONTACT the organization’s spill response team or emergency services.

Good Practices
Respond to the spill based on the hazards of the material and the workplace conditions.
WEAR adequate protective equipment for the hazards present.
USE appropriate tools and equipment for the spilled material (e.g. corrosion-resistant).
REMOVE or EXTINGUISH ignition sources.
STOP or REDUCE leak if safe to do so.
DO NOT touch spilled material.
PREVENT material from entering sewers, drains or confined spaces.
INCREASE ventilation to spill area.
PREVENT the spread of dusts and vapours to other areas.
USE a dust suppressant for very dusty materials if feasible.
CONTAIN spill with earth, sand or absorbent material that does not react with spilled material.
SOAK up spilled liquid with absorbent that does not react with spilled chemical.
SCOOP/SHOVEL spilled material into suitable, covered, labeled containers.
FLUSH spill area with water if safe and contain runoff for disposal.
HANDLE contaminated absorbent material as if it has the same hazards as the spilled product.
DISPOSE of waste material in an acceptable manner, in accordance with applicable legislation.
ENSURE that clothing, equipment and tools are properly decontaminated after the spill has been cleaned up.
REVIEW how the spill/leak occurred and PLAN how to prevent it from happening again.

Plan and prepare for emergencies…
Ensure everyone has been trained on how to respond in the event of a spill or leak.