

# RESPONDING TO CHEMICAL SPILLS

When working with a hazardous or dangerous substance, you need to be aware of the correct procedures to follow in the event of a spill. This fact sheet provides guidance on how to respond in the event of a chemical spill. For more detailed information refer to [UOW's Spill Management and Response Guidelines](#).

## TAKE THE FOLLOWING ACTION:

- Respond to the spill immediately.
- Stop the spill at its source, if it is safe to do so. For example, set right a tipped container, plug a hole or switch off a pump or compressor.
  - ➔ Turn off ignition sources, if it is safe to do so.
- Close doors, if required, to prevent further contamination.
- Notify others in the immediate vicinity of the spill.
- Provide First Aid response, or seek First Aid assistance, if required.

## THEN;

for **MINOR** spills:

- Ensure you are wearing the correct PPE to respond to the spill. Refer to Safety Data Sheet.
- Contain the spill using spill control absorbent material from the spill kit.
- Decontaminate the affected area, equipment and clothing as per Safety Data Sheet.
- Clean up thoroughly and neutralise any acids/alkalis

- Report the incident in SafetyNet.
- Investigate the cause of the spill and implement corrective and preventive action.

A spill is considered **MAJOR** if **YES** is answered to **any** of the following:

- Is there an immediate fire hazard?
- Does the quantity spilt pose a danger? Refer to the SDS, but the quantities below can be used as a guide:
  - ➔ >100mL or >10g of a highly hazardous chemical (red rated in ChemAlert) such as a carcinogen or 40% hydrofluoric acid.
  - ➔ >1L or >100g of a volatile or flammable solvent, or a highly reactive or corrosive substance.
  - ➔ >40mL of mercury.
- Is there an immediate threat to human life, property or the environment?
- Is the substance uncontained or outside of the laboratory or where the substance is normally used?

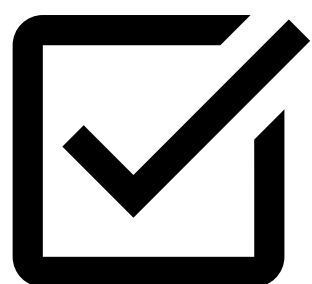
for **MAJOR** spills:

- Notify UOW Security on 4221 4900 or raise an emergency alert in SafeZone. Gather information to provide to emergency services for stopping the spill at its source, containing and cleaning up the spill, and decontaminating.
- Only provide support as directed by emergency services and ensure correct PPE is worn.
- Do not re-enter the spill area unless advised by emergency services that it is safe to do so.

In the event of a **MAJOR** Spill, contact security on **4221 4900** (security will call 000), or raise an emergency alert in SafeZone.

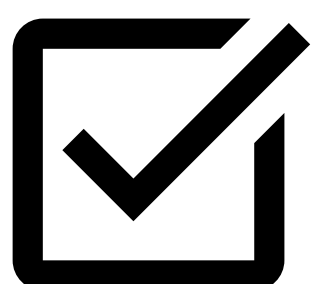
If First Aid Assistance is required, contact the First Aid Officer in your areas or contact Security on **4221 4555** (for non-life threatening situations) or **4221 4900** for emergency situations, or raise an Emergency or First Aid alert in SafeZone.

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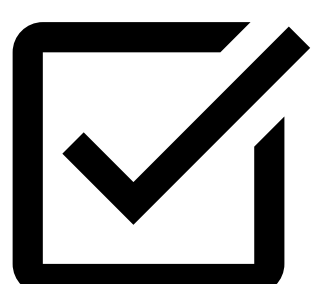
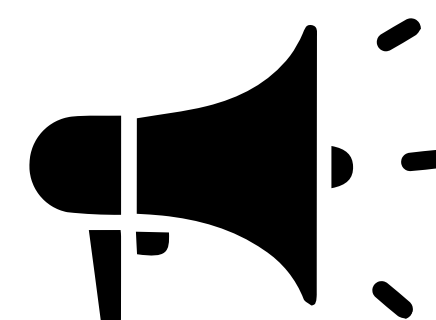
## Protect

yourself and others - only attempt to clean up after reading the Safety Data Sheet & wearing required Personal Protective Equipment.



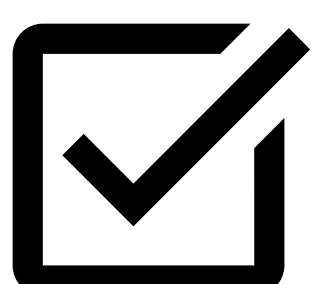
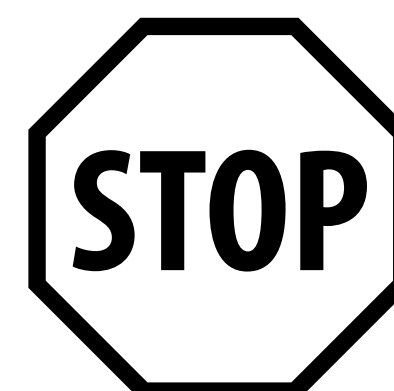
## Notify

others in the immediate vicinity and notify UOW Security on 4221 4900 if it is a major spill.



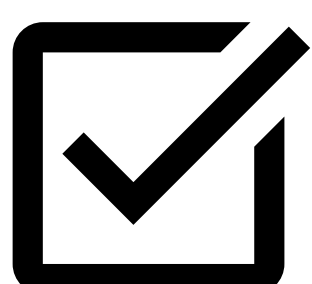
## Stop

the spill at its source.



## Contain

the spill by using the appropriate spill control absorbent from the spill kit.



## Clean Up

the spill using absorbent material from the spill kit and following instructions on the Safety Data Sheet.



## Report

the incident in SafetyNet, investigate the cause and implement corrective and preventative actions.



**i** Some major spills may be defined as “notifiable” by SafeWork NSW. The WHS Unit ([whs-admin@uow.edu.au](mailto:whs-admin@uow.edu.au)) are responsible for notifying SafeWork NSW in these instances.

**i** Some major spills may result in a “pollution incident” where there is risk of harm to the environment and the NSW EPA will need to be notified. In the event of a “pollution incident” contact the Environmental Unit ([environmental\\_team@uow.edu.au](mailto:environmental_team@uow.edu.au)) who will then notify the NSW EPA.

In the event of a **MAJOR** spill, contact security on **4221 4900** (security will call 000), or raise an emergency alert in SafeZone.

If First Aid Assistance is required, contact the First Aid Officer in your area or contact Security on **4221 4555** (for non-life threatening situations) or

**4221 4900** for emergency situations, or raise an Emergency or First Aid alert in SafeZone.