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EMERGENCY RESPONSE FOR CHEMICAL SPILLS AND EXPOSURE – A CRITICAL SKILL FOR JANITORIAL EMPLOYEES

safety lately



A monthly newsletter from A&A Elevated Facility Solutions



Emergency Response for Chemical Spills and Exposure – A Critical Skill for Janitorial Employees

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Janitorial employees work daily with a wide range of cleaning chemicals such as disinfectants, degreasers, strippers, and sanitizers. These substances, while essential to maintaining clean and healthy environments, can pose serious hazards if spilled, mixed improperly, or misused. That's why knowing how to respond swiftly and safely to chemical spills and exposures is not only vital to personal health, but also to the safety of others in the building and the protection of company property.

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Dehydration Prevention

This month's Safety Lately highlights proper emergency response steps and reinforces your role in maintaining a safe workplace. When janitorial staff are well-trained and prepared, risks are reduced, and everyone benefits.

Emergency response is a key component of janitorial safety. Unlike office workers, janitors are frequently exposed to chemicals during routine cleaning, floor care, restroom disinfection, and other tasks. A delayed or incorrect response to a spill can result in:

- Burns or injuries to the person handling the product
- Inhalation of harmful fumes
- Slips, falls, or secondary injuries to others
- Permanent damage to surfaces or equipment
- Environmental contamination

WHY EMERGENCY RESPONSE MATTERS

Spills and chemical exposures can occur during mixing, transferring, or applying cleaning products. Without quick and proper action, these incidents can result in:

- Skin and eye injuries
- Respiratory issues from inhaling vapors
- Slips and falls from wet or slick surfaces
- Environmental damage
- Prompt response helps minimize these risks and ensures regulatory compliance.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES INCLUDING FIRST AID, SPILL CONTAINMENT, AND PROPER DISPOSAL

Employers must also ensure emergency eyewash stations and spill kits are readily available in all chemical use and storage areas.

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STEPS TO TAKE DURING A CHEMICAL SPILL OR EXPOSURE

1. Alert and Evacuate if Necessary

- Notify nearby supervisor & staff immediately
- Evacuate the area if fumes are strong or spill is large
- Follow site-specific emergency procedures

2. Assess the Spill

- Identify the chemical using the SDS
- Determine the extent and potential hazards (flammable, corrosive, toxic)
- Avoid touching or breathing in vapors

3. Use PPE and Contain the Spill

- Don appropriate PPE (gloves, goggles, respirator if needed)
- Use absorbent materials or spill pads to contain and prevent spreading
- Block off affected area with signage or barriers

4. Clean Up Safely

- Follow SDS cleanup instructions
- Place waste in labeled hazardous waste containers
- Never pour chemicals down the drain unless explicitly permitted

5. Medical Attention and Decontamination

- For skin or eye contact, flush with water for at least 15 minutes
- Seek medical care if symptoms persist or exposure was severe

STAY PREPARED, STAY SAFE

Every janitor plays a key role in emergency readiness. Know where your spill kits, SDS, and eyewash stations are located. Practice your response steps and always wear your PPE. Quick thinking and safe actions protect you, your team, and your worksite.

Report all chemical spills and exposures to your supervisor and the Safety Department without delay. Your safety is our priority.

How to Naturally Boost your Metabolism

Our metabolism is responsible for converting nutrients we consume into fuel for the body to use to maintain, repair, and restore. Breathing, digestion, circulatory cardiovascular, and cellular repair are done by our metabolism. To accomplish these tasks the metabolism must burn energy (calories) to keep the body functioning. A "high metabolism" refers to higher caloric burning while at rest compared to a "slow metabolism". While no 1-food can increase your metabolism, certain lifestyle changes can help to improve your caloric burn at rest.

1. Keep it steady

Our metabolism thrives from balance. Eating every 3-4 hours of nutrient-dense foods containing a carbohydrate and protein. Skipping meals or going for long periods of not eating causes the metabolism to go into caution (storing fat/reducing caloric burn).

Think of the metabolism like an engine, consistent nutrient-dense consumption results in a smooth efficient metabolism.

2. Muscle, muscle, muscle

Muscle has a higher metabolic rate compared to fat. Engaging in a workout regimen that includes cardio and weight/resistance training helps to build muscle.

3. Watch out for stress

Stress is a normal part of life but finding ways to cope with stress is very important. When we are in highly stressful periods over time results in an increase in cortisol hormone production. Cortisol not only can affect your metabolism but also affect your ability to sleep! Getting enough sleep is crucial for body repair and recovery which aids metabolism support. Consider meditation, going for a walk, journaling, or talking to a mental health practitioner to cope with stress.

4. Hydrate!

Water is essential for all bodily processes! A hydrated body allows the metabolism to function efficiently.



**WORKING IN THE HEAT?
HERE IS WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT
DEHYDRATION PREVENTION**

Working during the summer months requires proper precautions to ensure we stay hydrated and safe during high temperatures. Aim for eight 8-ounce glasses of water a day. Be sure to hydrate in the morning when you wake up and to have water nearby throughout the day.



If you are feeling the heat?

Reach for water, electrolytes and carbohydrates.

Why should you limit caffeine and alcohol in the heat?

Alcohol and caffeine increase urination resulting in water loss. If you must have caffeine during the day, try to pair it with a glass of water to rehydrate.

Food includes water too!

Fresh fruit and vegetables are an excellent way to increase water consumption. Also experiment with flavored water if you find plain water boring. Lemon water or cucumber water may be an exciting addition to have!

What are the signs you may be dehydrated?

Dark urine, extreme thirst, dry mouth, dizziness, confusion and lack of sweating are a few signs you may be dehydrated.

