

**SUNY GENESEO
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Title: Sewage Response Plan	Approved by: Chuck Reyes
Revision No.: 1	Date: 2/14/25
Updated by: Darlene Necaster	Page 1 of 4

I. PURPOSE

This plan establishes clean-up procedures and safety measures to be followed during sewage spill and clean-up efforts. These procedures are designed to protect staff, students, the environment and the public from the potentially harmful effects associated with sewage spills.

II. RESPONSE PERSONNEL

Facilities Custodial staff and Zone Mechanics are the primary responders to sewage spills. Responsibilities include determining the cause of and stopping a sewage spill, proper clean up and disposal of spilled sewage. Custodial and Zone Supervisors shall be responsible for ensuring that response personnel are trained prior to engaging in sewage clean-up efforts and that sewage spill clean-up efforts are performed in accordance with this plan.

NOTE: If sewage back up is in a confined space, do not enter unless you have a confined space permit and have been properly trained.

III. RESPONSE TIME

In the event of a sewage spill, the response time is designed to be immediate to minimize health risks and environmental damage. If no personnel are currently on shift, additional staff will be promptly called in to handle the situation. During this time, first responders may need to wait for the specialized cleanup team to arrive and provide the necessary assistance.

IV. HEALTH HAZARDS

Many disease causing agents are potentially present in raw sewage. These organisms include bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites. In the U.S., most illnesses associated with raw sewage exposure produce mild to severe flu-like or cold-like symptoms. However, more serious illnesses, such as Hepatitis A can be contracted through direct contact (mouth, eyes, and nose) with raw sewage. With respect to HIV (AIDS) and HBV (Hepatitis B), generally, raw sewage and wastewater do not contain blood. Urine, feces, and other reasonably anticipated biological components comprising human wastes in sewage are not included in the definition of "other potentially infectious materials" unless "...visibly contaminated with blood..." [29 CFR 1910.1030(b)].

Since microorganisms can cause disease by entering the body through the mouth, eyes, and nose or through cuts and abrasions to the skin, proper hygiene, and appropriate personal

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protective equipment (PPE) must be utilized when the potential for direct contact with raw sewage is possible (see section VI of this document)

V. PROPER HYGIENE

- Wear waterproof gloves
- Wash your hands thoroughly after cleanup work. Use plenty of soap, scrub for at least 30 seconds and rinse thoroughly. *Frequent, routine hand washing is the most important safeguard in preventing infection by agents present in sewage.*
- **Do not touch fecal matter or raw sewage with bare hands.** Wear waterproof gloves and use an instrument such as tongs or a shovel when direct contact is necessary.
- Do not touch your nose eyes or mouth with your hands unless you just washed.
- Do not smoke, eat, drink, apply lip treatments or chew gum while cleaning fecal matter or raw 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 come into contact with the material. Use disinfectant to wash down contaminated equipment and surfaces.

VI. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND CLEAN UP EQUIPMENT

- Waterproof gloves
- Face shield/goggles
- Impervious coveralls
- Shoe/boot covers or rubber boots
- Filtering mask (for splash protection)
- Impervious coveralls
- Absorbent material such as spill pads or pigs
- Kaivac/Water pick-ups
- Disinfectant
- Clean towels and mops

VII. CLEAN UP PROCEDURE

- Evaluate how big the spill is (or may become) and take actions to contain the spill in the smallest area possible, cordon off the area with caution tape and cones to prevent

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unauthorized entry. If more staff assistance is needed, make the call. If possible, prevent the spill from entering a **storm drain**. (Different than floor or sanitary drain).

- Investigate the potential for electrical hazards and de-energize electrical circuits as necessary.
- Follow the “Proper Hygiene” section of this document during clean-up procedures.
- Acquire all appropriate PPE and clean-up equipment.
- Prepare disinfectant.
- Put on appropriate PPE.
- Use absorbent rolls (pigs or mats) if needed to restrict flow into other areas.
- Remove all furniture, loose rugs and other items from the contaminated area.
- Use kaivac’s and water pickups to suck up the wastewater.
- Saturated wall-to-wall carpet and carpet squares should be removed wrapped in plastic and placed in dumpster. These items can not normally be adequately cleaned. If carpet is deemed cleanable, it should be steam cleaned and disinfected.
- 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 detergent.
- Upholstered furniture, loose rugs, draperies etc. should be professionally cleaned.
- Zones or Core staff: remove and replace plaster, plasterboard and lath that have been saturated and are soft to the touch. If only the surface has been wet, clean as you would a hard surface. Be sure to check with EHS or asbestos team to see whether material contains asbestos.
- Take wastewater to adjacent buildings that are not affected by the backup and empty into toilets only.
- Clean sinks, rinse basins, and/or plumbing fixtures that have had contamination with disinfectant detergent.
- If spill is inside a building, contact Heating Plant to increase air circulation to reduce odors and mold growth. Open all windows and doors. The use of fans and dehumidifiers will speed the drying process.
- After wastewater is sucked up, disinfect all affected areas using comet w/bleach (walls, doors, floor, rubber boots, equipment and dumping area).
- Discard any towels and mop heads in a double plastic garbage bag.
- Following complete cleanup of the contaminated area, wash your hands thoroughly and launder soiled clothes separately.
- Report any damage caused by the backup (walls, personal belongings, etc. ASAP).

VIII. EXPOSURE AND FIRST AID

If you believe that raw sewage has come into direct contact with open skin such as a cut, abrasion, puncture etc., immediately and thoroughly wash the exposed area with copious

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amounts of soap and water and seek medical care. If sewage has come into contact with your eyes, nose or mouth, flush the area with running water for at least 15 minutes and seek medical care immediately especially if you experience any irritation discomfort or pain. Supervisors will need to complete an accident report.

IX. REFERENCES

Environment, Safety, Risk Management. Channel Islands, California State University

OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens Standard 1910.1030

<https://www.osha.gov>

SUNY Geneseo Bloodborne Exposure Control Plan

SUNY Geneseo Water Cleanup Plan with the Possibility of Electrical Hazards

SUNY Geneseo Mold Response Plan

X. REVISION HISTORY

Date	Revision No.	Description
2/14/25	1	Update exposure and first aid
2/14/25	1	Added info on mold response
2/14/25	1	Added info regarding water response (electrical hazards)