

# SAFETY AWARENESS

*Brief Topic Safety Refresher Training For Associates*

**2024**

## Handling Chemical Spills in the Classroom

Storing or handling chemicals in your classroom puts you and your students at risk for injuries due to spills, leaks or explosions. For this reason, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires that any workplace where hazardous chemicals are used must have an emergency action plan (EAP). The plan describes the procedures to follow during an emergency, such as a chemical spill, leak or explosion, including the following:

- Who to notify
- Who is in charge and who else has responsibilities in responding to the incident
- Who is responsible for each task
- How to evacuate the site

OSHA also requires all employees to be trained in EAP procedures, so that everyone is prepared. Notify your superior if you have not yet had training in EAP procedures or if you would like a refresher.

### Prevention

The first priority when working with chemicals is to try and prevent a spill, leak or explosion. You can contribute to that effort by doing the following:

- Knowing and understanding the chemicals you're working with, including any hazards—refer to the appropriate Safety Data Sheet (SDS) or ask questions if you are unsure
- Following all safety precautions
- Helping to make sure all chemicals are properly labeled in their container
- Teaching students about the chemicals they may be handling, including hazards, proper safety procedures and protective gear that should be worn, and doing everything possible to keep students from tampering with these chemicals

### Emergency Procedures

In the event of a chemical spill, leak or explosion, be sure to do the following:

- Immediately notify your supervisor
- Notify other teachers in the area
- Activate emergency alarms
- Call 911
- Keep students out of the area and explain how they can behave safely in the situation
- Leave the area if the spill cannot be readily contained, or if it presents an immediate danger to life or health
- Follow the evacuation rules in the EAP
- Leave cleanup to trained personnel, such as a hazardous materials team.

Do not try to do the following:

- Rescue or help injured people unless you are sure you will be safe
- Clean up a spill yourself, except where permitted by the EAP

OSHA requires these safety measures, and so do we. It is our hope that an accident like this never happens, but all employees and students should be prepared in case it does. Make sure you learn these precautions and follow them if you must respond to a hazardous chemical spill, leak or explosion in order to help keep yourself, your coworkers and your students safe.

