

SOP –Ethidium Bromide spills

Always wear protective clothing (as described in "Safety precautions," above) when cleaning up a small spill of EtBr. Use a UV light source to locate the spill; EtBr's fluorescence is easy to see. If the spill is **powder**, carefully wipe it up with wet paper towels and follow the decontamination procedure below. If the EtBr spill is **liquid**, absorb freestanding liquid with dry paper towels. Use UV light to locate any remaining EtBr, then follow the decontamination procedure below.

Wear full protective equipment (lab coat, gloves, and goggles)

Decontamination solution

solution of 4.2 g of sodium nitrite (NaNO₂, CAS # 7362-00-0)
20 ml of hypophosphorous acid (50 percent) (H₃PO₂, CAS # 6303-21-5)
300 ml of water.

Cleaning up

- 1) Wash the area with a paper towel soaked in decontamination solution. Rinse the area five times with paper towels soaked in tap water, using a fresh towel each time.
- 2) Using a UV light, check the area to ensure that all the EtBr has been removed. Repeat decontamination procedure as necessary. If the acid could damage the contaminated surface, use a few additional rinses with paper towels soaked in tap water.
- 3) Soak all the towels in decontamination solution for one hour. Then remove them, gently wring out excess solution back into the decontaminant container, and double-bag along with contaminated gloves and other contaminated items.
- 4) Using chemical names, clearly label the container of decontamination solution and bag of cleanup materials (e.g., "Laboratory debris contaminated with ethidium bromide"), and contact EH&S or follow the disposal procedures below.
- 5) if no solution is available, h₂O and soap washed 3 times is sufficient. Remember to dispose according to protocol

Contact:

In case of contact with eyes, immediately flush with copious amounts of water for at least 15 minutes. In case of skin contact, immediately wash skin with soap and water. If inhaled, remove to fresh air and seek medical attention. Contact EH&S at 2252 or 2338.

Waste Disposal:

All waste shall be placed in closed containers, properly labeled and moved to the Hazardous Waste Accumulation area located near the loading dock of the Science Facility. Notify EH&S x2252 of Waste to be picked up from the Hazardous Waste Accumulation area.