

Realize. **Safety** first.

Safety Advisory

Event:

A lab worker at the University of Washington was removing a container of hydrochloric acid from a cabinet when the bottom fell out of the container, causing two liters of the solution to spill out. The worker was able to use the safety shower to clean himself, but was taken to hospital for treatment of significant acid burns. First responders could not safely enter the building because the levels of acid fumes were so high. Using special chemical protective suits, workers eventually applied a neutralizing agent and contained the spill.

University of Regina Prevention Measures:

Chemical containers will often degrade over time simply due to their age, the environment they are stored in, and the chemicals they contain. However, it is especially important to ensure chemicals are compatible with the containers they are to be stored in, as degradation will occur much more rapidly if there are incompatibilities.

As always, lab supervisors and PI's have the responsibility to ensure that:

- Containers are checked periodically for any signs of degradation (including lids and liners that help maintain a good seal)
- All chemical and waste containers are compatible with their contents
- Training on the safe storage and use of hazardous chemicals for all who work in the lab is provided and documented
- All lab users are wearing appropriate PPE at all times when working with chemicals
- Emergency equipment like eyewashes and showers are easily accessible and functional. **NOTE:** Lab managers must flush eyewashes for 3-5 minutes weekly; FM tests the showers annually
- Lab users are aware of emergency procedures, and that they can call Campus Security (4999) to activate the UofR Spill Response Team in the case of a spill

Please remember to communicate this information to all personnel using chemicals. We ask that all labs take this opportunity to check the integrity of their chemical containers, and submit all suspect containers to HSE for disposal

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