SEWAGE SPILL RESPONSE PROCEDURE

PURPOSE: To establish minimum expected requirements and performance of employees when responding to spills involving sewage. It is intended to ensure that acceptable steps are followed to protect both the employees involved in the response, and the public from chemical and pathogenic exposure injury.

OBJECTIVE: To provide employees with safe and healthy working conditions.

SCOPE: All University of Alaska Fairbanks employees.

I. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Environmental Health, Safety, and Risk Management (EHS&RM) - EHS&RM shall provide the following required training: 1) hazardous materials response; 2) biohazard awareness; and 3) confined space.

B. Physical Plant - The Physical Plant will be the primary responder for sewage spills. It will be responsible for the proper cleanup and disposal of spilled sewage. It will also be responsible for issuing confined space permits for spills in confined spaces.

C. Supervisors - Supervisors within the Physical Plant shall be responsible for seeing that sewage spill response requirements are met for each incident. They will assure proper confined space entry requirements are met (see Document 804). The supervisor will establish emergency phone contact numbers prior to cleanup operation. The supervisor will contact UAF EHS&RM, 474-5413. UAF EHS&RM will contact the appropriate regulatory agencies as needed.

II. GENERAL

This standard covers the minimum procedures and requirements for responding to cleaning up and disposing of sewage spill materials within a building, confined space, or outside. Improper response can result in the spread of infection, odor problems, and contamination of valuable facilities, injury to, or death of, employees.
III. APPLICATION

Any employee whose job requires him to perform response to, and cleanup of, sewage spills, or any supervisor, whose job is to oversee such an employee, is covered by this procedure. As outlined in Document 804, any employee involved in spills in confined spaces will attend confined space training and use proper procedures and permitting for confined space operations. Any employee dealing with sewage spills should have biohazard awareness training and will use proper procedures to prevent exposure to human body fluids. Each employee involved in sewage cleanups will receive information of chemical hazards for any sterilants used in such operations.

IV. AUTHORIZED EMPLOYEE

A person who responds to sewage spills, or any person, who affects that employee's performance during such a response.

V. SEWAGE SPILL

Any unintentional release of sewage effluent to the environment whether inside a building, confined space, or outdoor area.

VI. CLEANUP

Any action taken to clean an area involving a sewage release. This includes the initial site assessment, confined space monitoring and permitting (if required), removal of materials, disposal of sewage removed, disposal of materials contaminated with sewage, site sanitation, and decontamination of workers.

VII. CONFINED SPACE

See Document Number 804 for confined space work rules and laws.

VIII. PROCEDURE

A. Sewage spills on University property shall be reported to the Facilities Services (474-7000) and UAF EHS&RM (474-5413). A Facilities Services employee will respond to the vicinity of the spill to evaluate the scope of the problem. UAF EHS&RM will make the proper notification to ADEC.

B. If the spill is in an area that might be definable as a confined space, the employee will first notify a supervisor to evaluate the area and prepare a confined space permit. Air monitoring, ventilation, rescue capabilities, and respiratory support systems will all be established, as needed, by the supervisor, before any further cleanup operation within a confined space.

C. Proper personal protective equipment (PPE) for employees involved in the cleanup of sewage spills includes rubber boots, rubber gloves, and work clothes. A moisture proof suit will help in
personal cleanup after the incident. Respiratory protection will be used, if required, because of confined space, or any other circumstance that will require such.

D. Small spills may be cleaned with absorbents and buckets. Indoor areas that have gross contamination removed should then be sanitized with full strength household bleach. The solution should have contact time with the affected areas for at least 15-30 minutes. If the spill is outside a building, or confined space, hydrated lime should be spread over the area and mixed into the soil if in non-paved areas. The use of bleach will possibly constitute an illegal chemical release if used outside, and should not be utilized. Equipment used should be sanitized after gross contamination. Bleach is a good sanitizer for equipment. Any sterilant used should have the ability to raise the pH of the affected area to 12, or less, and should not have a resilient chemical problem for users in the area.

E. Larger spills may require specialized equipment and these will be secured as necessary by the supervisor in charge. If the spill is within a confined space, special equipment should be augmented with caution. The supervisor will note any additional hazard such equipment may cause. Sanitizing the area after the removal of the gross contamination should proceed as described in "D" above.

F. Sewage that is recovered must be disposed of in a sewage treatment facility. It is not to be dumped on land, in storm drains, or at any other site not designed to handle sewage. Materials used to absorb sewage may be burned, if it is of a paper base. The University's incinerator is adequate for the job. Arrangements for burning contaminated cleanup materials should be made through the EHS&RM, Hazmat Section, 474-5617.

G. Workers shall follow sanitary habits in the course of working in a cleanup area, and prior to returning to their normal work duties, or leaving work for the day. Employees shall utilize PPE as described above. PPE will be sanitized, or disposed, properly after use. Employees will wash with soap and water immediately after the incident is over. Absolutely no eating, drinking, or smoking will occur in the spill area. When an employee leaves the spill area for a break, or refreshment, he will remove contaminated PPE at the boundary of the site and wash his hands prior to drinking, eating, or smoking.

IX. CONTRACTORS

If outside contractors are required for a cleanup, Facilities Services will ensure that the contract calls for procedures similar to these to protect the University from liability. Contract oversight will ensure that the procedures are followed.