



# UNIVERSITY of NEW HAMPSHIRE

## Broken Fluorescent Lamp Clean Up Guidelines for Authorized Personnel

Only trained, authorized personnel may perform the clean up of broken fluorescent light bulbs at UNH. Campus community members should not attempt to clean up broken fluorescent light bulbs. If you have witnessed a fluorescent lamp break at UNH, please contact the Facilities Support Center at 862-1437. If you have questions about these procedures or general questions about mercury, please call the Office of Environmental Health and Safety and 862-4041.

### Clean Up Procedures

**NOTE:** The following procedures are to be used in the event that *up to* four 4-foot fluorescent light tubes, two 8-foot fluorescent light tubes, or eight compact fluorescent light bulbs, break at one time. Facilities Operations and Maintenance will hire an environmental contractor to manage the clean up of broken bulbs in excess of these quantities.

1. Gather clean up materials or a pre-prepared fluorescent bulb clean up kit. This must include safety glasses, heavy gloves (use nitrile, natural rubber, or PVC only), disposable shoe covers, a dust pan, a squeegee, small pieces of cardboard with at least one straight edge, paper towels, a small spray bottle filled with water, air-tight sealable 6-mil plastic disposable bags or a rigid plastic container with a tight-fitting lid, a flashlight, duct tape, and mercury absorbent powder (commercially available from various safety distributors).
2. Remove jewelry and put on personal protective equipment (gloves, disposable shoe covers, and safety glasses).
3. Secure the area around the breakage to keep broken bulb debris from being tracked to other areas. Close doors and restrict access to the room until clean up has been completed.
4. Turn off all fans and air conditioning systems to prevent mercury vapors from being circulated to other areas. Open a window for ventilation.
5. Wait 5 minutes before beginning. Never use a vacuum cleaner for cleaning up a mercury spill and never flush mercury down the drain.
6. **Hard Flooring:** Begin removing broken glass with dustpan, cardboard, or squeegee. Work from the outer edge of the debris area, moving in towards the center. Place the broken pieces in a disposal bag or container. Shine a flashlight to find glass fragments. Use duct tape to pick up glass fragments. Avoid skin contact.
7. **Carpeted Areas:** Fold or roll the carpet so that mercury debris is trapped inside and place the carpet in a plastic bag for disposal. If breakage is on wall-to-wall carpet, the Facilities Support Center can arrange for an environmental clean up contractor for assistance.
8. Sprinkle mercury absorbent powder on the breakage site to stop the release of vapors. Mist powder with water from a spray bottle. Wipe up the powder with a moist paper towel and place in a sealed container with other contaminated debris.
9. Carefully remove gloves by turning them inside out to contain any powder on the surface of the gloves. Place all debris, clean up materials, tools and equipment, and any contaminated clothing in a double bag and place in a sealed container and keep in a safe place for pickup. Wash skin using soap and water following clean up.
10. Contact the Office of Environmental Health and Safety to remove waste from the site.

### ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

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