



Guidance for Cleaning Up Broken Compact Fluorescent Light (CFL) Bulbs

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Each compact fluorescent light bulb (CFL) contains very small amount of mercury in either powder or pellet form. The greatest risk to you if a bulb breaks is getting cut by glass shards. The amount of mercury in a light bulb is extremely small however precautions shall be taken.

The following guidance provides instructions for cleaning up a broken fluorescent light bulb. Following these steps will protect you and others from getting cut by broken glass, and from potential exposure to mercury that is released when a bulb breaks.

Required Materials

1. Caution tape, stanchion or other material to delineate the spill area
2. Disposable Gloves
3. Index Cards or other stiff paper
4. Smallest possible sealable container (e.g. plastic bag)
5. Sticky tape such as duct tape
6. Damp paper towel or wet wipe

Clean-Up Procedures for Hard Surfaces

DO NOT USE A VACUUM OR A BROOM TO CLEAN UP A BROKEN BULB

1. Have people leave the room or area.
2. Cordon off the area where breakage occurred so that nobody steps in broken glass, phosphor powder or mercury. This should be done as soon as possible.
3. If there is window or door that opens to the outside near the broken bulb, open it to ventilate the area and wait about 15 minutes. If the broken bulb is in an inside area such as hallway where there is no window or door to the outside or outside the building, do not wait to cleanup.
4. Wearing disposable gloves, use stiff paper to carefully push the glass and powder to a central point where you can scoop it up, being careful not to get it on your clothing. Place the broken fragments into the container.
5. Use sticky tape such as duct tape to pick up visible glass shards, powder, mercury and place in the container. Then using wet wipes or a moist paper towel, wipe the area thoroughly. Place used towels and disposable gloves into the container and close it tightly. Once closed, do not re-open it to put more material in.
6. Label the container with a hazardous waste label with the following wording: "Hazardous Waste – Broken Fluorescent Lamp with gloves, tape and towels". Also, please fill-in the accumulation start date as today's date.

Clean-Up Procedures for Carpeted Surfaces

DO NOT USE A VACUUM OR A BROOM TO CLEAN UP A BROKEN BULB

Research performed by the [Maine Department of Environmental Protection](#) has shown that after standard cleanup procedures, some residual mercury may remain on the carpet. If the carpet is in an area where young children or pregnant women may be exposed:

1. Cut out or replace that section of the carpet if possible. If not, follow the Clean-Up Procedures for Hard Surfaces.

After completing removal or cleaning of the area, ventilate the area to the outside to best of your ability, using a fan if possible. Keep foot traffic off the immediate area for several days.

Disposal of Clean-Up Materials

1. Wash your hands when done.
2. Contact SCU Environment, Health and Safety to dispose of clean-up material.

These spill clean-up procedures are only good for single broken bulb clean-ups. For large amounts of broken bulbs, contact Environment, Health and Safety immediately and they will respond to clean the area appropriately.

Environment, Health and Safety Contact			
	Name	Title	Contact Information
Primary Contact	Henry Gucho	EHS/Fire Technician	408-551-1983 hgucho@scu.edu
Secondary Contact	Dave Mathe	EHS Manager	408-554-4406 dmathe@scu.edu
Secondary Contact	Sean Collins	EHS Director	408-554-5078 scollins@scu.edu