



Working in Potentially Hazardous Conditions around Human Waste, Sewage, Oil and Household Hazardous Waste

KEY POINTS

The following guidance is intended to **reduce risk of illness and contamination** while recognizing that ideal conditions may not be available during Typhoon Halong emergency response. Please do your best with the resources at hand and prioritize safety.

- Wear waterproof gloves and protective clothing to prevent contact with contamination.
- Wash your hands with soap and clean, running water after working in potentially contaminated conditions and especially before eating or smoking.
- Workers without HAZWOPER training should not respond to spills of oil or other hazardous material. Report spills of oil or hazardous material to DEC via 1-800-478-9300.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Anyone working in areas where human waste, sewage, oil or household hazardous waste (like paint, cleaning supplies, or antifreeze) may be present should have proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), be trained how to use it, and should have access to handwashing facilities. **Wash hands with soap and water *immediately* after removing PPE.**

The following PPE is recommended for people working in areas potentially contaminated by human waste, sewage, oil or household hazardous waste. This list is not exhaustive, appropriate PPE needs to be based on the specific tasks a person is doing and the worksite conditions. We recognize that full PPE may not always be available in these remote locations – do the best you can safely.

Recommended PPE includes:

- **Liquid-repellent coveralls or raingear:** to keep contamination off clothing. Disposable preferred; reusable must be cleaned after each use.
- **Waterproof gloves:** to prevent exposure to contamination. Gloves need to be capable of withstanding the work without ripping or tearing.
- **Rubber boots:** to prevent exposure to contamination. Steel toe or puncture-resistant if working around debris.
- **Goggles:** to protect eyes from splashes and flying debris.
- **Protective face mask and/or splash-proof face shield:** to protect nose and mouth from splashes and/or inhalation of fine debris.

DECONTAMINATION AND BASIC HYGIENE PRACTICES

Decontamination after working in and around human waste, sewage, oil or household hazardous waste is critical to prevent migration of contamination and human exposure. Especially in limited-resource settings, taking steps to reduce contamination exposure is critical:

- Remove dirty coveralls, gloves and boots before leaving the worksite and before eating, drinking, smoking or entering clean areas like shelters, sleeping areas, or community kitchens and feeding areas.
- [Wash hands with soap and water](#) immediately, when possible, after handling human waste or sewage and after removing work gloves. If water isn't available, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol to clean your hands. Hand sanitizer will not remove dirt or other contamination.
- Non disposable external work clothing exposed to human waste or sewage should be cleaned daily if feasible. A wipe down or spray bottle of a simple solution is 0.05% chlorine (1 part household bleach to 100 parts water).
- Wash boots at worksites in a tube or tote before entering clean areas using a 10% chlorine solution (1 part household bleach to 9 parts water) if practical.
- Avoid touching your face, mouth, eyes, nose, or open sores and cuts while working around contaminated materials. Keep open sores, cuts, and wounds covered with clean, dry bandages.
- **Do not** smoke or chew tobacco or gum while handling human waste or sewage.
- Gently flush eyes with clean water if human waste or sewage comes into contact with the eyes.

PRACTICAL GUIDANCE FOR CHALLENGING CONDITIONS

- We understand that handwashing stations, running water, and full PPE may not always be available. **Do what you can do safely with the resources you have:** disposable gloves, hand sanitizer, basic face covering, and cleaning wipes reduce exposure to contamination.
- Prioritize preventing contamination in areas where others eat, sleep, or gather. Removing or washing boots, changing gloves, and avoiding touching your face reduces risk.
- Communicate any unmet needs (PPE, water, cleaning supplies) immediately to your supervisor so support can be staged as resources allow.
- **Bottom line:** Do the best you can with available resources, take precautions, and **focus on protecting yourself and the community.**