

VOMIT SPILL RISKS



Q: What are the risks of vomit spills in the workplace?

A: An unplanned spill involving vomit in the workplace can introduce multiple risks for any organization. Vomit spills should be taken very seriously, particularly in restaurants, schools and health care settings. Like other body fluids, vomit can carry dangerous pathogens that can spread quickly and survive on surfaces for days or weeks. These pathogens can lead to serious foodborne illnesses that affect employees, customers and other visitors to your workplace. The best way to reduce the following risks is the safe and effective removal of vomit by trained team members.



Spread Of Foodborne Illness

Vomit is a common carrier of foodborne illnesses like norovirus, salmonella and E. coli. Symptoms of these illnesses include unexpected vomiting. These illnesses spread easily by coming into contact with contaminated surfaces and food and water.



Employee Downtime

Foodborne illnesses like norovirus can cause unexpected vomiting, dehydration and body aches for up to three days. Anyone is susceptible to these illnesses. These symptoms can make it hard for employees to report to work and perform daily tasks. Employees who do report to work while they are sick can put other individuals at risk.



Foodborne Illness Outbreaks And Litigation

Customers, guests and employees who come into contact with contaminated food or surfaces at restaurants, schools and other food service establishments may decide to pursue legal action. Unplanned vomit events can lead to foodborne illnesses and put your establishment at risk.



Facility Closings

In extreme cases, foodborne illness outbreaks can lead to store or school closings while physical surfaces are professionally cleaned and treated in order to neutralize additional risks. These closings are typically driven by management or state and local health departments.



Increased Regulatory Scrutiny

Foodborne illness outbreaks occurring in restaurants and schools or any other licensed food service operators can trigger unplanned inspections by state and local health departments. These visits can lead to additional compliance burdens that managers have to contend with.



Reputation Damage

Bad news tends to travel fast. It's common for outbreaks of foodborne illnesses (which can be cause of workplace-related vomit spills) to be reported by local news and on social media. This can result in unwanted attention and damage to hard fought reputations.