

# Domestic Chemical Spill in London

CASE STUDY

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE CHALLENGE..... 2

THE IDEAL SOLUTION..... 2

DANGERS OF CHEMICAL SPILLS..... 4



London, United Kingdom



## Domestic Chemical Spill in London

CASE STUDY

### THE CHALLENGE

A domestic chemical spill may seem like something you can clean up with a cloth or mop, but in reality, products containing hazardous materials or chemicals can easily cause serious injury. For example, toxic or poisonous gases can cause breathing difficulties, while corrosive chemicals can cause severe burns.

For a London resident, a domestic chemical spill in a garage could not be identified by the owner, and so they took appropriate action due to the health hazard risk. The challenge for the Ideal Response Team was to identify the nature of the chemical spill and neutralise what could have potentially been a very dangerous and harmful chemical spill with associated health hazards.



### THE IDEAL SOLUTION

When Ideal were contacted regarding the domestic chemical spill in London, our client believed that the chemical spillage was a 20-year-old drain cleaning substance, which had then set like tar on the garage flooring. The concerned customer initially rang the fire brigade who were called out to assist, and they put sand and salt onto the affected area and informed the owner to keep the area well ventilated.

Due to the severity of the situation, when the client called Ideal we dispatched a team immediately and they were on-site within hours of the initial call. This is our customary fast response to dealing with dangerous substances, via our 24 hours a day, 7 day a week service.

The team arrived on site fully equipped and ready with the correct PPE for even the most hazardous substances and situations. In this case, the chemical spill was not immediately identifiable, so our team erred on the side of caution and anybody not directly linked to the clean-up operation was distanced from the area. Our technicians wore full personal protection gear until the spill could be correctly identified and the handling methods and risks established.

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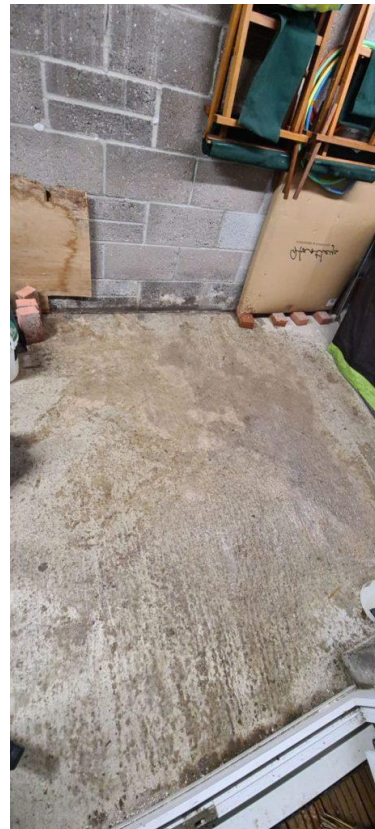
CASE STUDY

Ideal have invested in the most up-to-date equipment available, and we used it to carry out an analysis of the chemicals within the spill to ascertain the risks involved and establish the quickest and most effective remedial solution.

Once we established the chemicals involved, we moved on to decontamination. For the chemical spill in the garage, we began by using a high alkaline base neutraliser on the affected area, which ensured that the spill was neutralised and safe to work with.

We then thoroughly cleaned the entire area, and used a 'wet vac' industrial strength vacuum to absorb liquid from the surface. The liquid was then transferred to a secure container ready for transportation away from the customer's property.

Ideal then fully tested that the garage was safe for use again – this was extremely important for our client since as they have small children living in the property, and their safety was a paramount concern.



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CASE STUDY

### DANGERS OF CHEMICAL SPILLS

We all have products in our homes and garages that may be hazardous if used, stored or disposed of improperly. Examples include cleaning agents such as bleaches, dishwasher powders, oven cleaners, drain cleaners and turpentine, pest control products, weed killers, gardening and car cleaning products, and swimming pool chemicals.

Chemical spills can be very hazardous to health and the environment and depending on the chemicals involved in the spillage, could also be fatal. If you don't know the identity of the product spilled (as was the case here), and don't have appropriate PPE, it is imperative that you contact a professional chemical clean up company like Ideal Response; we deal with everything from small domestic chemical spills to large scale industrial spills.

There are certain actions you can take while you wait. Your main concern should be personal safety: if you think a chemical is at risk of exploding or causing fire, move away from it immediately; if possible, cordon off the area to prevent unnecessary exposure and risk. However, if you are certain the spill does not present an immediate danger to life and health, you can try to control the spread of the spill (only) if you have a spill kit.

However tempting it may be, do not touch any spilled liquids or solid materials or touch damaged containers without fully protected hands and clothing. And do not assume that a spill is harmless because of a lack of smell – many chemicals anaesthetise the nose which eliminates the sense of smell.

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