

Proper Use of Cleaning Chemicals

Safety Meeting Packet

Protect Your Workforce



Cleaning chemicals can be hazardous to workers and cause various health problems ranging from skin rashes and burns to respiratory impairment or even death. Several different industries employ individuals who regularly handle cleaning duties. These industries include, but are not limited to, restaurant workers, custodians, janitorial staff, and maintenance workers. Employers must educate

workers about the hazards of cleaning chemicals, provide appropriate personal protective equipment when necessary, and set basic rules for safe chemical-handling and storage.

There are numerous factors that influence whether a cleaning product may result in health problems, including:

- Chemical ingredients
- Use and storage
- Area ventilation
- Splashes or spills
- Contact with skin
- Chemical mists, vapors, or gases



Types of Cleaning Products

Cleaning chemicals and products are categorized into three main types: cleaners, sanitizers, and disinfectants. Cleaners remove dirt and are used via wiping, mopping, and scrubbing. Sanitizers are used to reduce viruses, bacteria, and molds. Disinfectants, which are different from sanitizers, destroy microorganisms like bacteria and viruses.



Health Problems

Working with hazardous cleaning chemicals may result in the following symptoms:

- Coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath, or asthma
- Sore throat
- Red, itchy eyes
- Headaches or dizziness
- Skin rashes and burns
- Nosebleeds



Green Cleaners

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) have advised employers to select “green” cleaning products whenever possible. These products are safer for workers and the environment. “Green” cleaners must be certified by independent organizations as meeting specific criteria defined by the certifying organization. However, not all cleaners that have the word “green” in their name are certified. Employers must make sure to consult the safety data sheets (SDSs) for information about the cleaners used, regardless of whether they are considered “green”.

Material Safety Data Sheets

Employers are required to obtain and store Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) for all hazardous cleaning products and chemicals that are used in the workplace. In accordance with the employer’s hazard communication program, MSDSs must be made available to workers and contain the following information:

- Hazardous chemical ingredients
- Symptoms and potential health problems
- First-aid measures
- Recommended personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Instructions on how to handle spill cleanup

Safe Work Practices

Workers should follow these basic rules when working with cleaning chemicals:

- Read and understand the instructions, labels, and MSDSs of each chemical or product prior to use.
- Never mix cleaning products that contain bleach and ammonia. This results in a chemical reaction that may lead to the release of dangerous gases which can cause severe lung damage or death.
- Some cleaners are purchased in a concentrated form and require dilution prior to use. Know which products must be diluted and how to correctly dilute the cleaner.
- When necessary, use protective clothing, gloves, and safety goggles.
- Make sure the area is well ventilated. If you start to feel light-headed or the smell of a cleaner is bothering you, take a break and get some fresh air.
- Wash your hands thoroughly before eating, drinking, or smoking after using chemicals and cleaners of any kind.

Chemical Spill Cleanup

A spill kit may be used to clean up a chemical spill. These kits should include:

- Materials to contain liquids
- An absorbent material
- A neutralizing agent
- Waste containers
- A brush and scoop
- Proper personal protective equipment (PPE)
- And additional products



Employee Training

OSHA's Hazard Communication Standard contained within 29 CFR 1910.1200 was created to ensure that employers educate their employees about chemical hazards and associated protective measures. Under the OSHA standard, employers are required to provide the following training to employees:

- How to clean chemical hazards.
- Proper handling, use, and storage of cleaning products, including dilution procedures.
- Safety procedures for handling spills.
- Identification and proper use of personal protective equipment.
- Location and use of hazard information, including labels and MSDSs.



For additional information, please consult the following:

- OSHA Standard: 29 CFR 1910.1200 - Hazard Communication - Toxic and Hazardous Substances.
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Proper Use of Cleaning Chemicals Safety Meeting Attendance Acknowledgement

Company Name _____
 Department / Division _____
 Meeting Date & Time _____ AM PM
 Meeting Location _____
 Name & Title of Individual Conducting Meeting _____

Key Meeting Discussion Points / Important Reminders:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Internal Procedures Reviewed:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

By signing this document, you confirm your attendance at the meeting and acknowledge the issues addressed above!

Employees in Attendance		
(Print): _____	(Print): _____	(Print): _____
(Sign): _____	(Sign): _____	(Sign): _____
(Print): _____	(Print): _____	(Print): _____
(Sign): _____	(Sign): _____	(Sign): _____
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(Sign): _____	(Sign): _____	(Sign): _____
(Print): _____	(Print): _____	(Print): _____
(Sign): _____	(Sign): _____	(Sign): _____

Employees not present: _____

Suggestions/Recommendations to improve workplace safety and health: _____

Actions Taken: _____

Manager/Supervisor: _____ Date: _____

Disclaimer:

The information provided above was assembled using multiple resources. However, these materials do not contain ALL the information available regarding the required safety standards under local, provincial, state, or federal law for your industry.
