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1. EPA Final Rule: Methylene Chloride

On May 8, 2024, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) issued a final rule regulating the manufacture, distribution, and use of methylene chloride (89 FR 39254). This rule was issued under the authority of the Toxic Control Substance Control Act. The rule bans certain uses of methylene chloride and restricts certain other uses. This rule potentially impacts the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) community, particularly those who use methylene chloride as a laboratory solvent/reagent, and persons using certain products containing methylene chloride such as paint strippers, adhesives, sealants, and degreasers/cleaners.

This form (<https://forms.office.com/r/CRMWnpgVBX>) is intended to facilitate gathering of data about persons at UNL (including students) who may be using methylene chloride or products containing methylene chloride. Please complete this form if you are aware of or suspect use of methylene chloride or products containing methylene chloride. Another name for methylene chloride is dichloromethane. The rule contains varying dates of compliance, with regulated entities being required to conduct exposure assessments in certain circumstances no later than May 2025. EHS will follow-up on all submissions to assess each use individually and collaborate with the campus community to develop compliance plans.

Please submit this form promptly. If you have questions regarding this form, please contact EHS at ehs@unl.edu or 402.472.4925.

2. Distracted Driving in Nebraska – Wrong Direction

As we navigate through the 100 days of summer, traffic fatalities in Nebraska are ahead of where they were at this time last year. Nebraska is

experiencing an alarming increase in speeding and distracted driving incidents. Recent incidents, including a NDOT worker who was struck and injured by a motorist in an active work zone, highlight the severity of poor decision-making on the road.

Distracted driving is the new impaired driving and breaking this cycle is rooted in education, the behaviors we model for our kids behind the wheel, and committing to a safe driving environment in all areas of our lives. This requires a collaborative effort with individuals and businesses working together to prioritize road safety.

Road safety in Nebraska is heading in the wrong direction but you can help reverse that trend!

Resources

- Lassen, R. (n.d.). *Connections Podcast: Episode 11*. June 27, 2024. <https://nesafetycouncil.org/index.php/about/press-room/connections-podcast-series/podcast-archive/2-uncategorised/413-connections-podcast-episode-11>
- Lassen, R. (n.d.-b). *Connections Podcast: Episode 12*. <https://nesafetycouncil.org/index.php/about/press-room/connections-podcast-series/podcast-archive/2-uncategorised/416-connections-podcast-episode-12>

3. NEW Laser Safety Program for Class 3B and 4 Lasers Used in Research

In collaboration with the Office of Research and Economic Development, EHS has developed an institutional laser safety program for class 3B and 4 lasers used in research. Under this program, users are required to register their lasers with the institutional Laser Safety Committee and complete training. EHS has published three Safe Operation Procedures relative to the Laser Safety Program. These SOPs are listed below as “Resources.”

Training is accomplished by completing the on-line training module for Class 3B and 4 Lasers and device-specific training. This training is required of any University of Nebraska-Lincoln affiliated person planning to work with Class 3B or Class 4 devices in a research setting. Practical, device-specific training is provided by the Authorized User or their designee(s). Device-specific training must be documented with a Specific Training Form for Class 3B or Class 4 Lasers.

If you have questions, contact EHS at 402.472.4925 or email lasersafety@unl.edu.

Resources

- EHS **Laser Safety** web-based training <https://ehs.unl.edu/web-based-training>
- EHS Safe Operating Procedures (SOPs)
 - Class 3B and Class 4 Research Lasers https://ehs.unl.edu/s-laser-class%203B_4%20Research%20Lasers.pdf
 - Laser Safety Control Measures https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-laser-safety_control_measures.pdf
 - Laser Safety Calculations Guide https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-laser-safety_calculation_guide.pdf

If you have questions contact the Laser Safety Officer, 402.472.4925 or email lasersafety@unl.edu.

4. Revised 4-Unit Chemical Safety Training (Laboratory)

On May 20, 2024, the United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration published an amendment to the Hazard Communication Standard (29 CFR 1910.1200). This is the standard for safely handling and communicating the hazards of chemicals. Major changes are summarized below. This is not an exhaustive list of changes but does reflect those changes that are likely of most interest to the UNL community.

- In this amendment, OSHA added a definition for combustible dust (which is one of many potential traits of a hazardous chemical). OSHA defined combustible dust as “finely divided solid particles of a substance or mixture that pose a flash-fire hazard or explosion hazard when dispersed in air or other oxidizing media.”
- Under the previous rule, chemicals packaged in aerosol cans were included within the category of compressed gas cylinders and associated with the compressed gas cylinder pictogram. In the revised standard, chemicals packaged as aerosols have been assigned to a new category specifically for aerosols and other

chemicals packaged under low pressure and they are no longer identified with the compressed gas cylinder pictogram.

- A new hazard category was added for “desensitized explosives.” Under the amended standard, “desensitized explosives” are defined as solid or liquid explosive chemicals which are phlegmatized to suppress their explosive properties. Phlegmatized means that a substance has been added to an explosive to enhance its safety in handling and transport. The phlegmatizer renders the explosive insensitive, or less sensitive to the heat, shock, impact, percussion, or friction. Typical phlegmatizing agents include but are not limited to wax, paper, water, polymers, alcohol and oils, such as petroleum jelly and paraffin). These materials will be associated with the flame pictogram.
- Under the revised standard, pyrophoric gases are now part of the “Flammable Gas” hazard category. The Flammable Gas hazard category also now includes chemically unstable gases. The hazard statement assigned to a pyrophoric gasses states “May ignite spontaneously if exposed to air.” Hazard statements assigned to unstable gases are “May react explosively even in the absence of air” or “May reactive explosively even in the absence of air at elevated pressure and/or temperature.”
- Self-reactive chemicals, type B, were previously identified with the bomb pictogram. They are now assigned the bomb and flame pictograms.
- In this amendment, another category of reproductive toxicity was added: Effects on or Via Lactation. This category recognizes that some chemical substances that women may be exposed to can interfere with lactation or may be present in breast milk in amounts sufficient to cause concern for the health of breast-fed children. No pictograms are assigned to this category of reproductive toxicity. Chemicals in this category will be associated with the following hazard and precautionary statements.

- May cause harm to breast-fed children.
- Avoid contact during pregnancy and while nursing.
- Wash thoroughly after handling.
- Obtain special instruction for use.

Manufacturers have from 18 – 36 months to make changes to Safety Data Sheets and chemical labels. So, it may be some time before the campus community begins seeing these changes. EHS has or is in the process of revising all chemical safety training modules to reflect these changes and expects to complete this process by the end of September 2024.

Resources

- **EHS Chemical Safety** web-based training (four units)
<https://ehs.unl.edu/web-based-training>
- **EHS Chemical Safety** Safe Operating Procedures (SOPs)
<https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/chemical-safety>

5. Safe and Sound Week August 12-18

Safe + Sound Week is a nationwide event held each August that recognizes the successes of workplace health and safety programs and offers information and ideas on how to keep America's workers safe. Successful safety and health programs can proactively identify and manage workplace hazards before they cause injury or illness, improving sustainability and the bottom line. Participating in Safe + Sound Week can help get your program started, energize an existing one, or provide a chance to recognize your safety successes.

Resources

- *Safe + sound week*. Occupational Safety and Health Administration. (n.d.). <https://www.osha.gov/safeandsoundweek>

6. Updated Safe Operating Procedures

The following SOPs have been updated to reflect changes by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to the Hazard Communication Standard.

- **Chemical Security**
<https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-chemsecurity.pdf>

- **Corrosive Chemical Hazards & Risk Minimization**
https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-corrosive_chem_haz_risk_min.pdf
- **Emergency Eyewash and Shower Equipment**
https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-emerg_eyewash_shower.pdf
- **Flammable Solids Hazards & Risk Minimization**
https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-flammable_solids_haz_risk_min.pdf
- **General Guidance for Chemical Ordering, Receipt, Distribution, Use & Storage**
https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-gen_chem_guidance_o_r_d_u_s.pdf
- **Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) Portable Cylinders**
https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-lpg_cylinder.pdf
- **Toxicology and Exposure Guidelines**
https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/tox_exposure_guidelines.pdf

Additional SOP Updated:

- **Heat Stress** <https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-heatstress.pdf>
Updated to reflect OSHA's proposed Heat Injury and Illness Prevention Program regulations. As such, specific guidance is provided relative to heat index triggers, acclimation protocols, hydration, rest periods, training, and maintaining communication with employees working in the heat.

ADOPT SAFETY AS YOUR ATTITUDE – DON'T LEARN BY ACCIDENT!

Environmental Health and Safety

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