Hazardous Materials Safety Topic

This section addresses employee safety in regards to handling/ disposing of hazardous materials.

Overview

The term “hazardous materials” applies to all chemicals, gases, or items that pose potentially danger to people or the environment. A substance that is classified as “toxic” is one that causes illness or death. Due to the illnesses and long term effects associated with hazardous materials there are many laws and regulations in place to protect those responsible for handling the material.

The governing body of OSHA regulates hazardous materials, addressing the general safety and health of employees in the workplace. However the CDC and EPA also have constraints and limitations concerning hazardous material.

Employee Protection

Before using any chemical- hazardous or otherwise it is essential that employees and employers alike be familiar with the individual MSDS. Coming into contact with materials deemed hazardous requires the proper use of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment). Toxic chemicals can enter the body through contact with unprotected skin, inhalation, ingestion or vapors/fumes to the eyes.

Disposal

The governing bodies of OSHA, EPA, and CDC have individual rules and regulations pertaining to individual chemicals. It is best to seek out specific information regarding the hazardous material in use.