

Hazardous Materials Stats and Facts

FACTS

Common Hazardous Materials: In the USA, hotels commonly handle hazardous materials such as cleaning chemicals, pool maintenance chemicals, and materials containing asbestos, especially in older buildings.

Chemicals are available in solid, liquid, powder, granules, tabs and gel forms. They include:

1. laundry and dishwashing detergents (which may contain some/any of the following: alkalis, bleaching agents, sequestering agents, surfactants, solubilisers and acids)
2. toilet and bath cleaners (acids, alkalis)
3. bleaches (may include hydrogen peroxide, sodium hypochlorite, sodium chlorite and sodium perborate)
4. surface and floor cleaners (alkalis, surfactants, solvents)
5. disinfectants (quaternary ammonium compound, chlorine, acids, alcohols, peroxygen)
6. degreasers and oven cleaners (alkalis, surfactants, solvents)
7. descalers or delimers (acids, such as hydrochloric acid)
8. glass cleaners (solvents, surfactants)
9. metal cleaners (solvents)
10. dry-cleaning chemicals (organic solvents such as perchloroethylene, a chlorinated hydrocarbon)
11. swimming pool chemicals such as chlorine and bromine.

STATS

A study conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) identified these chemicals as the top five that caused injuries in the workplace.

- The top cause of carbon monoxide release in the workplace was equipment failure. Over the course of nearly a decade, 2,364 injuries were reported.
- Ammonia is a colorless gas. Exposure can cause irritation and severe burns to the skin, mouth, throat, lungs, and eyes. The top cause of Ammonia release in the workplace was equipment failure – 1,153 injuries were reported.
- The top cause of chlorine release in the workplace was human error. During this time period, 763 injuries were reported.
- The top cause of hydrochloric acid release was human error. A total of 326 injuries were reported.
- The top cause of sulfuric acid release was equipment error. A total of 318 injuries were reported.
- An estimated yearly total of one million+ U.S. employees could be exposed to toxic materials.