Right to Know

Hazardous Substance Fact Sheet

Common Name: **ARSENIC**

Synonyms: Gray Arsenic; Arsen

Chemical Name: Arsenic

Date: June 1998 Revision: April 2008

CAS Number: 7440-38-2

RTK Substance Number: 0152

DOT Number: UN 1558

EMERGENCY RESPONDERS >>>> SEE BACK PAGE

Description and Use

Arsenic is a silver-gray or white metallic, odorless, brittle solid. It is used as an alloying agent for heavy metals, and in solders, medicines and herbicides.

Hazard Summary

Hazard Rating	NJDOH	NFPA
HEALTH	4	-
FLAMMABILITY	0	-
REACTIVITY	0	-

CARCINOGEN
POISONOUS GASES ARE PRODUCED IN FIRE

Hazard Rating Key: 0=minimal; 1=slight; 2=moderate; 3=serious; 4=severe

Reasons for Citation

- **Arsenic** is on the Right to Know Hazardous Substance List because it is cited by OSHA, ACGIH, DOT, NIOSH, NTP, DEP, IARC, IRIS and EPA.
- This chemical is on the Special Health Hazard Substance List.

SEE GLOSSARY ON PAGE 5.

- **Arsenic** can affect you when inhaled and may be absorbed through the skin.
- **Arsenic** is a CARCINOGEN and may cause reproductive damage. HANDLE WITH EXTREME CAUTION.
- Skin contact can cause irritation, burns, rash and loss of pigment
- Eye contact can cause irritation and burns.
- Inhaling **Arsenic** can irritate the nose and throat and can cause an ulcer or hole in the “bone” (septum) dividing the inner nose.
- Exposure to **Arsenic** can cause weakness, poor appetite, nausea, vomiting, headache, and even death.
- **Arsenic** may damage the nervous system and the liver.
- **Arsenic** is a noncombustible solid, but when in *dust* or *fine powder* form it can EXPLODE when exposed to heat, flame or hot surfaces.

FIRST AID

Eye Contact

- Immediately flush with large amounts of water for at least 15 minutes, lifting upper and lower lids. Remove contact lenses, if worn, while rinsing. Seek medical attention.

Skin Contact

- Quickly remove contaminated clothing. Immediately wash contaminated skin with large amounts of soap and water.

Inhalation

- Remove the person from exposure.
- Begin rescue breathing (using universal precautions) if breathing has stopped and CPR if heart action has stopped.
- Transfer promptly to a medical facility.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222

CHEMTREC: 1-800-424-9300

NJDEP Hotline: 1-877-927-6337

National Response Center: 1-800-424-8802

Workplace Exposure Limits

OSHA: The legal airborne permissible exposure limit (PEL) is **0.01 mg/m^3** averaged over an 8-hour workshift.

NIOSH: The recommended airborne exposure limit (REL) is **0.002 mg/m^3**, which should not be exceeded at any time.

ACGIH: The threshold limit value (TLV) is **0.01 mg/m^3** averaged over an 8-hour workshift.

- **Arsenic** is a CARCINOGEN in humans. There may be no safe level of exposure to a carcinogen, so all contact should be reduced to the lowest possible level.
- The above exposure limits are for air levels only. When skin contact also occurs, you may be overexposed, even though air levels are less than the limits listed above.

Determining Your Exposure

- Read the product manufacturer's Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) and the label to determine product ingredients and important safety and health information about the product mixture.
- For each individual hazardous ingredient, read the New Jersey Department of Health Hazardous Substance Fact Sheet, available on the RTK website (www.nj.gov/health/eoh/rtkweb) or in your facility's RTK Central File or Hazard Communication Standard file.
- You have a right to this information under the New Jersey Worker and Community Right to Know Act, the Public Employees Occupational Safety and Health (PEOSH) Act if you are a public worker in New Jersey, and under the federal Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) if you are a private worker.
- The New Jersey Right to Know Act requires most employers to label chemicals in the workplace and requires public employers to provide their employees with information concerning chemical hazards and controls. The federal OSHA Hazard Communication Standard (29 CFR 1910.1200) and the PEOSH Hazard Communication Standard (N.J.A.C. 12:100-7) require employers to provide similar information and training to their employees.

This Fact Sheet is a summary of available information regarding the health hazards that may result from exposure. Duration of exposure, concentration of the substance and other factors will affect your susceptibility to any of the potential effects described below.

Health Hazard Information

Acute Health Effects
The following acute (short-term) health effects may occur immediately or shortly after exposure to **Arsenic**:

- Skin contact can cause irritation, burns, rash and loss of pigment.
- Eye contact can cause irritation, burns and red, watery eyes.
- Inhaling **Arsenic** can irritate the nose and throat causing coughing and wheezing.
- Exposure to **Arsenic** can cause weakness, poor appetite, nausea, vomiting, headache, muscle cramps and even death.

Chronic Health Effects
The following chronic (long-term) health effects can occur at some time after exposure to **Arsenic** and can last for months or years:

Cancer Hazard
- **Arsenic** is a CARCINOGEN in humans. It has been shown to cause skin and lung cancer.
- Many scientists believe there is no safe level of exposure to a carcinogen.

Reproductive Hazard
- Chronic **Arsenic** exposure has been associated with spontaneous abortions and still births.
- There is limited evidence that **Arsenic** is a teratogen in animals. Until further testing has been done, it should be treated as a possible teratogen in humans.

Other Effects
- Repeated skin contact can cause thickened skin and/or patchy areas of darkening and loss of pigment. Some persons may develop white lines on the nails.
- Long-term exposure can cause an ulcer or hole in the "bone" (septum) dividing the inner nose, hoarseness and sore eyes.
- **Arsenic** may damage the nervous system causing numbness, "pins and needles," and/or weakness in the hands and feet.
- **Arsenic** may damage the liver.

Medical

Medical Testing
Before first exposure and every 12 months thereafter, OSHA requires your employer to provide (for persons exposed to greater than **0.005 mg/m^3** of *Arsenic*) a work and medical history and exam which shall include:

- Chest x-ray
- Exam of the nose, skin and nails
- Test for urine **Arsenic**. This is most accurate at the end of the workday. Eating shellfish or fish may elevate **Arsenic** levels for up to two days. At NIOSH recommended exposure levels, urine **Arsenic** should not be greater than **100 micrograms per liter** of urine.

After suspected overexposure, repeat these tests and consider exam of the nervous system and liver function tests. Also examine your skin periodically for abnormal growth. Skin cancer from **Arsenic** can be easily cured when detected early.

OSHA requires your employer to provide you and your doctor with a copy of the OSHA *Inorganic Arsenic* Standard (29 CFR 1910.1018).

Any evaluation should include a careful history of past and present symptoms with an exam. Medical tests that look for damage already done are not a substitute for controlling exposure.

Request copies of your medical testing. You have a legal right to this information under the OSHA Access to Employee Exposure and Medical Records Standard (29 CFR 1910.1020).

Mixed Exposures
- More than light alcohol consumption can cause liver damage. Drinking alcohol may increase the liver damage caused by **Arsenic**.

Conditions Made Worse By Exposure
- May scientists believe that skin changes such as thickening and pigment changes make those skin areas more likely to develop skin cancer.

Workplace Controls and Practices

Very toxic chemicals, or those that are reproductive hazards or sensitizers, require expert advice on control measures if a less toxic chemical cannot be substituted. Control measures include: (1) enclosing chemical processes for severely irritating and corrosive chemicals, (2) using local exhaust ventilation for chemicals that may be harmful with a single exposure, and (3) using general ventilation to control exposures to skin and eye irritants. For further information on workplace controls, consult the NIOSH document on Control Banding at www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/ctrlbanding/.

The following work practices are also recommended:

- Label process containers.
- Provide employees with hazard information and training.
- Monitor airborne chemical concentrations.
- Use engineering controls if concentrations exceed recommended exposure levels.
- Provide eye wash fountains and emergency showers.
- Wash or shower if skin comes in contact with a hazardous material.
- Always wash at the end of the workshift.
- Change into clean clothing if clothing becomes contaminated.
- Do not take contaminated clothing home.
- Get special training to wash contaminated clothing.
- Do not eat, smoke, or drink in areas where chemicals are being handled, processed or stored.
- Wash hands carefully before eating, smoking, drinking, applying cosmetics or using the toilet.

In addition, the following may be useful or required:

- Specific engineering controls are required for this chemical by OSHA. Refer to the OSHA *Inorganic Arsenic* Standard (29 CFR 1910.1018).
- Use a vacuum or a wet method to reduce dust during clean-up. DO NOT DRY SWEEP.
- Use a high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter when vacuuming. Do not use a standard shop vacuum.

Personal Protective Equipment

The OSHA Personal Protective Equipment Standard (29 CFR 1910.132) requires employers to determine the appropriate personal protective equipment for each hazard and to train employees on how and when to use protective equipment.

The following recommendations are only guidelines and may not apply to every situation.

Gloves and Clothing

- Avoid skin contact with **Arsenic**. Wear personal protective equipment made from material which can not be permeated or degraded by this substance. Safety equipment suppliers and manufacturers can provide recommendations on the most protective glove and clothing material for your operation.
- Safety equipment manufacturers recommend *Nitrile*, *Natural Rubber* or *Silver Shield*® for gloves and DuPont *Tyvek*®, or the equivalent, as protective materials for clothing.
- All protective clothing (suits, gloves, footwear, headgear) should be clean, available each day, and put on before work.

Eye Protection

- Wear impact resistant eye protection with side shields.
- Wear a face shield with goggles when working with corrosive, high irritating or toxic substance.

Respiratory Protection

Improper use of respirators is dangerous. Respirators should only be used if the employer has implemented a written program that takes into account workplace conditions, requirements for worker training, respirator fit testing, and medical exams, as described in the OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard (29 CFR 1910.134).

- Where the potential exists for exposure not higher than **0.1 mg/m^3**, use a half-mask air purifying respirator equipped with high efficiency filters.
- Where the potential exists for exposure not higher than **0.5 mg/m^3**, use a full facepiece, air purifying respirator with high efficiency filters.
- Where the potential exists for exposure not higher than **5 mg/m^3**, use any powered-air purifying respirator with high efficiency filters or a half-mask supplied-air respirator operated in a positive pressure mode.
- Leave the area immediately if (1) while wearing a filter or cartridge respirator you can smell, taste, or otherwise detect **Arsenic**, (2) while wearing particulate filters abnormal resistance to breathing is experienced, or (3) eye irritation occurs while wearing a full facepiece respirator. Check to make sure the respirator-to-face seal is still good. If it is, replace the filter or cartridge. If the seal is no longer good, you may need a new respirator.
- Consider all potential sources of exposure in your workplace. You may need a combination of filters, prefilters or cartridges to protect against different forms of a chemical (such as vapor and mist) or against a mixture of chemicals.
- Exposure to **5 mg/m^3** is immediately dangerous to life and health. If the possibility of exposure above **5 mg/m^3** exists, use a NIOSH approved self-contained breathing apparatus with a full facepiece operated in a pressure-demand or other positive-pressure mode equipped with an emergency escape air cylinder.

Fire Hazards

If employees are expected to fight fires, they must be trained and equipped as stated in the OSHA Fire Brigades Standard (29 CFR 1910.156).

- **Arsenic** is noncombustible, however, **Arsenic** *dust* or *fine powder* can explode when exposed to heat, flame or hot surfaces.
- Use dry chemical, CO_2, water spray or foam as extinguishing agents.
- POISONOUS GASES ARE PRODUCED IN FIRE, including *Arsenic Oxides*.
- Use water spray to keep fire-exposed containers cool.

Spills and Emergencies

If employees are required to clean-up spills, they must be properly trained and equipped. The OSHA Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response Standard (29 CFR 1910.120) may apply.

If **Arsenic** is spilled, take the following steps:

- Evacuate personnel and secure and control entrance to the area.
- Eliminate all ignition sources.
- Collect powdered material in the most convenient and safe manner, or use a HEPA-filter vacuum for clean-up, and deposit in sealed containers.
- Ventilate area of spill after clean-up is complete.
- DO NOT wash into sewer.
- It may be necessary to contain and dispose of **Arsenic** as a HAZARDOUS WASTE. Contact your state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) or your regional office of the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for specific recommendations.

Handling and Storage

Prior to working with **Arsenic** you should be trained on its proper handling and storage.

- A regulated, marked area should be established where **Arsenic** is handled, used or stored as required by the OSHA *Inorganic Arsenic* Standard (29 CFR 1910.1018).
- **Arsenic** reacts with OXIDIZING AGENTS (such as PERCHLORATES, PEROXIDES, PERMANGANATES, CHLORATES, NITRATES, CHLORINE, BROMINE and FLUORINE) to cause fires and explosions.
- **Arsenic** reacts with ACIDS (such as HYDROCHLORIC, SULFURIC and NITRIC) and HYDROGEN GAS to produce toxic *Arsine gas*.
- **Arsenic** is not compatible with *powdered* METALS (such as ZINC, LITHIUM, RUBIDIUM and PLATINUM); BROMINE AZIDE; LEAD MONOXIDE; and MERCURY OXIDE.
- Store in tightly closed containers in a cool, well-ventilated area away from COMBUSTIBLES and HEAT.
- DO NOT store in metal tanks.

Occupational Health Information Resources

The New Jersey Department of Health offers multiple services in occupational health. These services include providing informational resources, educational materials, public presentations, and industrial hygiene and medical investigations and evaluations.

For more information, please contact:

New Jersey Department of Health
Right to Know
PO Box 368
Trenton, NJ 08625-0368
Phone: 609-984-2202
Fax: 609-984-7407
E-mail: rtk@doh.state.nj.us
Web address: http://www.nj.gov/health/eoh/rtkweb

GLOSSARY

ACGIH is the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists. They publish guidelines called Threshold Limit Values (TLVs) for exposure to workplace chemicals.

Acute Exposure Guideline Levels (AEGLs) are established by the EPA. They describe the risk to humans resulting from once-in-a lifetime, or rare, exposure to airborne chemicals.

Boiling point is the temperature at which a substance can change its physical state from a liquid to a gas.

A **carcinogen** is a substance that causes cancer.

The **CAS number** is unique, identifying number, assigned by the Chemical Abstracts Service, to a specific chemical.

CFR is the Code of Federal Regulations, which are the regulations of the United States government.

A **combustible** substance is a solid, liquid or gas that will burn.

A **corrosive** substance is a gas, liquid or solid that causes destruction of human skin or severe corrosion of containers.

DEP is the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.

DOT is the Department of Transportation, the federal agency that regulates the transportation of chemicals.

EPA is the Environmental Protection Agency, the federal agency responsible for regulating environmental hazards.

ERG is the Emergency Response Guidebook. It is a guide for emergency responders for transportation emergencies involving hazardous substances.

Emergency Response Planning Guideline (ERPG) values are intended to provide estimates of concentration ranges where one reasonably might anticipate observing adverse effects.

A **fetus** is an unborn human or animal.

A **flammable** substance is a solid, liquid, vapor or gas that will ignite easily and burn rapidly.

The **flash point** is the temperature at which a liquid or solid gives off vapor that can form a flammable mixture with air.

IARC is the International Agency for Research on Cancer, a scientific group.

Ionization Potential is the amount of energy needed to remove an electron from an atom or molecule. It is measured in electron volts.

IRIS is the Integrated Risk Information System database maintained by federal EPA. The database contains information on human health effects that may result from exposure to various chemicals in the environment.

LEL or **Lower Explosive Limit**, is the lowest concentration of a combustible substance (gas or vapor) in the air capable of continuing an explosion.

mg/m^3 means milligrams of a chemical in a cubic meter of air. It is a measure of concentration (weight/volume).

A **mutagen** is a substance that causes mutations. A **mutation** is a change in the genetic material in a body cell. Mutations can lead to birth defects, miscarriages, or cancer.

NFPA is the National Fire Protection Association. It classifies substances according to their fire and explosion hazard.

NIOSH is the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. It tests equipment, evaluates and approves respirators, conducts studies of workplace hazards, and proposes standards to OSHA.

NTP is the National Toxicology Program which tests chemicals and reviews evidence for cancer.

OSHA is the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration, which adopts and enforces health and safety standards.

PEOSHA is the New Jersey Public Employees Occupational Safety and Health Act, which adopts and enforces health and safety standards in public workplaces.

Permeated is the movement of chemicals through protective materials.

PIH is a DOT designation for chemicals which are Poison Inhalation Hazards.

ppm means parts of a substance per million parts of air. It is a measure of concentration by volume in air.

A **reactive** substance is a solid, liquid or gas that releases energy under certain conditions.

STEL is a Short Term Exposure Limit which is usually a 15-minute exposure that should not be exceeded at any time during a work day.

A **teratogen** is a substance that causes birth defects by damaging the fetus.

UEL or **Upper Explosive Limit** is the highest concentration in air above which there is too much fuel (gas or vapor) to begin a reaction or explosion.

Vapor Density is the ratio of the weight of a given volume of one gas to the weight of another (usually *Hydrogen*), at the same temperature and pressure.

The **vapor pressure** is a measure of how readily a liquid or a solid mixes with air at its surface. A higher vapor pressure indicates a higher concentration of the substance in air and therefore increases the likelihood of breathing it in.

Right to Know Hazardous Substance Fact Sheet

Emergency Responders Quick Reference

Common Name: **ARSENIC**

Synonyms: Gray Arsenic; Arsen
CAS No: 7440-38-2
Molecular Formula: As
RTK Substance No: 0152
Description: Silver-gray or white metallic, odorless, brittle solid

HAZARD DATA

Hazard Rating	Firefighting	Reactivity
4 - Health **0 - Fire** **0 - Reactivity** **DOT#:** UN 1558 **ERG Guide #:** 152 **Hazard Class:** 6.1 (Poison)	**Arsenic** is noncombustible, however, *Arsenic dust* or *fine powder* can explode when exposed to heat, flame or hot surfaces. Use dry chemical, CO_2, water spray or foam as extinguishing agents. POISONOUS GASES ARE PRODUCED IN FIRE, including *Arsenic Oxides*. Use water spray to keep fire-exposed containers cool.	**Arsenic** reacts with OXIDIZING AGENTS (such as PERCHLORATES, PEROXIDES, PERMANGANATES, CHLORATES, NITRATES, CHLORINE, BROMINE and FLUORINE) to cause fires and explosions. **Arsenic** reacts with ACIDS (such as HYDROCHLORIC, SULFURIC and NITRIC) and HYDROGEN GAS to produce toxic *Arsine gas*. **Arsenic** is not compatible with *powdered* METALS (such as ZINC, LITHIUM, RUBIDIUM and PLATINUM); BROMINE AZIDE; LEAD MONOXIDE; and MERCURY OXIDE.

SPILL/LEAKS

Isolation Distance:

Spills: 25 to 50 meters (75 to 150 feet)

Fire: 800 meters (1/2 mile)

Moisten spilled material first or use a HEPA-filter vacuum for clean-up.

DO NOT wash into sewer.

Toxic to aquatic organisms.

PHYSICAL PROPERTIES

Odor Threshold:	Odorless
Flash Point:	Noncombustible solid
Vapor Pressure:	1 mm Hg at 701°F (372°C)
Specific Gravity:	5.7 (water = 1)
Water Solubility:	Insoluble
Boiling Point:	1,350°F (613°C)
Ionization Potential:	9.87 eV
Molecular Weight:	74.9

EXPOSURE LIMITS

OSHA:	0.01 mg/m^3, 8-hr TWA
NIOSH:	0.002 mg/m^3, 15-min Ceiling
ACGIH:	0.01 mg/m^3, 8-hr TWA
IDLH:	5 mg/m^3

PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Gloves:	Natural Rubber, Nitrile or Silver Shield®
Coveralls:	DuPont Tyvek®
Respirator:	<0.1 mg/m^3 - Full facepiece APR with High efficiency filter <0.5 mg/m^3 -Supplied air

HEALTH EFFECTS

Eyes:	Irritation, burns, red and watery eyes
Skin:	Irritation, burns, itching, rash and loss of pigment
Inhalation:	Nose and throat irritation with coughing, wheezing and hoarseness
	Weakness, headache, nausea, vomiting, and muscle cramps
Chronic:	Cancer (skin and lung) in humans

FIRST AID AND DECONTAMINATION

Remove the person from exposure.

Flush eyes with large amounts of water for at least 15 minutes. Remove contact lenses if worn. Seek medical attention.

Quickly remove contaminated clothing and wash contaminated skin with large amounts of soap and water.

Begin artificial respiration if breathing has stopped and CPR if necessary.

Transfer to a medical facility.