

Hazardous Material in the Home

- Nearly every household uses products containing hazardous materials. Although the risk of a chemical accident is slight, knowing how to handle these products and how to react during an emergency can reduce the risk of injury.

- Know the antidotes for accidental poisoning from cleaners and germicides, deodorizers, drain and bowl cleaners, gases, home medications, laundry bleaches, liquid fuels, and paint removers or thinners.

- Store household chemicals according to the directions on the label.

- Read instructions on how to dispose of chemicals properly.

- Small amounts of the following products can be safely poured down the drain with plenty of water: antifreeze, bathroom and glass cleaner, bleach, drain cleaner, fertilizer, household disinfectants, laundry and dishwashing detergents, rubbing alcohol, rug cleaner, upholstery cleaner, and toilet bowl cleaners.

- Small amounts of the following products should be disposed by wrapping the container in newspaper, then plastic, and placing it in the trash: brake fluid, car wax or polish, dish and laundry soap, drain cleaner, fertilizer, furniture and floor polish, insect repellent, nail polish, oven cleaner, paint thinners and strippers, pesticides, powder cleansers, toilet bowl cleaner, water-based paint, and wood preservatives.

- Dispose of the following products at a recycling center or a collection site: kerosene, motor or fuel oil, car battery, battery acid, diesel fuel, transmission fluid, large amounts of paint, thinner, stripper, power steering fluid, turpentine, gun cleaning solvents, and tires.

- Medications and spray cans: flush medicines that are no longer being used or that are out-dated down the toilet and place the empty container in the trash.

- Empty spray cans by pressing the button until nothing comes out and then place the can in the trash. Do not place spray cans into a burning barrel, incinerator, or trash compactor because they may explode.

- Keep fire extinguishers in your home and car.

- Post the number of the nearest poison control center by the telephone.

- Learn to recognize the symptoms of toxic poisoning: difficulty in breathing, irritation of the eyes, skin, throat or respiratory tract; changes in skin color, headaches or blurred vision, dizziness, clumsiness or lack of coordination, cramps or diarrhea.

- If there is a danger of fire or explosion, call the fire department after you get out.

- Stay away from the house to avoid the possibility of breathing toxic fumes.

- Wash hands, arms, and other parts of the body that may have been exposed to the chemical.

- Discard any clothing that may have been contaminated.

- **Administer first aid treatment to victims of chemical burns:** call 911 for emergency help, remove clothing and jewelry from around the injury, pour clean cool water over the burn for 15-30 minutes, loosely cover the burn with a sterile or clean dressing. Be sure that the dressing will not stick to the burn. Refer the victim to a medical professional for further treatment.

- **Eye contact with a hazardous substance:** it is important to take immediate action. Delaying first aid can greatly increase the likelihood of an eye injury. Flush the eye with clear, lukewarm water for a minimum of 15 minutes. Continue the cleansing process even if the victim indicates he or she is not longer feeling pain, and then seek medical attention.