

CHLORINE

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What is Chlorine?

It is an element used in both household and industry settings. When liquid chlorine is released it can turn into a poisonous gas, which can be dangerous when inhaled. Chlorine gas has an irritating odor, similar to bleach and it appears to have a yellow-green color.

Common Uses

- As a household bleach.
- To kill bacteria in drinking water and swimming pool water.
- To sanitize wastewater.
- To produce pesticides, rubber, and solvents.



DO NOT mix chlorine bleach with chemicals containing acid or ammonia (i.e. drain cleaners, ammonia, cleansers). It will form toxic chlorine gas.

Chemical Information

- By itself chlorine is not flammable; BUT it can become reactive and explosive when combined with other chemicals (i.e. turpentine or ammonia).
- Chlorine gas has a yellow-green hue.
- Chlorine gas has a higher density than air, which keeps the gas low to the ground where it can spread rapidly.

Hazards Identification

Most likely route of exposure is inhalation and eye exposure. Injury to the skin can occur if skin is exposed to concentrated gas or near the release of pressurized liquid.

ACUTE EXPOSURE: These symptoms may appear during or immediately following an exposure to high levels of chlorine:

- Blurry Vision, watery eyes
- Irritation of the nose, throat, and eyes
- Coughing, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Chest tightness
- Headache
- Redness, blisters, and burning sensation of the skin (if exposed to gas)

CHRONIC EXPOSURE:

- Long-term exposure to low levels of chlorine gas is potentially linked to diseases of the lung (bronchitis, shortness of breath, possible permanent damage) and tooth corrosion.
- No cancer or reproductive effects have been reported from chronic exposure to chlorine.



For assistance managing exposures to hazardous substances, please call North Carolina Poison Control at 1-800-222-1222.

In case of a life threatening emergency, dial 9-1-1 immediately.



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