

Cleaning Chemical Safety Program

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INTRODUCTION

1. When used carefully and properly, conventional and environmentally friendly cleaning chemicals are relatively safe to use. However, because accidents do happen, there are precautions that should be taken when handling cleaning chemicals and solutions.
2. This document focuses on the use of chemicals in cleaning processes at large theocratic facilities. Even when using cleaning substances labeled “green,” or “eco-friendly,” there may still be hazards or unexpected reactions that can occur when they come into contact with another chemical or are used in a particular work environment. Performing a thorough risk assessment is vital to keeping all workers safe.

CLEANING CHEMICAL SAFETY PROGRAM

3. It is important that a well-documented list of all cleaning chemicals that are used in the facility is prepared and distributed to all who will be in contact with them. Those working with chemicals should be informed of the intended and safe usage of each chemical and of any dangers associated with their usage.
4. Because chemical compositions can change, the risks associated with each chemical used should be periodically examined and assessed. The results of these assessments must be well-documented and communicated to those using the chemicals, and controls should be put in place to minimize the risks.
5. A chemical safety program should be put in place commensurate with the size of a facility and the types of chemicals being used. The program should include the elements outlined in paragraphs 6-12.
6. **Risk Assessment:** Before any chemical is used for a new task, a risk assessment should be performed that focuses on the hazards for that task as it relates to the specific area where the work is being done. Consider any hazards the worker may be exposed to in the course of their duties. Care should be given to educate not only the worker but any others who may be exposed to that environment. Clearly identify in the assessment and job plans any chemicals that are flammable or hazardous to health.
7. **Safety Data Sheets (SDS):** Safety Data Sheets should be available for all hazardous chemicals used in a work environment or by cleaners. There may be chemicals used in the work environment that can react with cleaning chemicals. The chemical supplier or manufacturer is responsible for providing the SDS. The SDS, whether printed or electronic,

should be easily accessible to the workers. Information in the SDS should be used to make workers aware of the hazards that the particular chemical presents, what chemicals can react with it, and how to protect themselves when using it (for example, safety gloves may be required if the chemical is an irritant or is corrosive).

8. Labels on Chemical Containers: The hazard classification information provided on the label of the chemical provides some information on the hazards and precautions to take when using the product. More detailed information can be found in the SDS. All chemicals must be labeled according to classification, labelling and packaging regulations, including the hazard pictogram, hazard classification, hazard phrase, and precautionary statements. Specific direction on what is required may be found in the Globally Harmonized System (GHS) of classification and labeling of chemicals, or other similar documentation required by local law. Training should be provided to workers on the safe handling of each chemical used, as well as on understanding the danger symbols found on the label and SDS. If any containers are found that have no labels, they should be disposed of safely. If chemicals are poured into smaller containers for easier usage, the containers should be clearly labeled with the same label as the larger containers.

9. Storage of Chemicals: An inventory should be kept of all chemicals used in the workplace. Stock levels of in-use chemicals should be reviewed regularly, and any expired chemicals, or those no longer used, should be safely disposed of. Chemicals should be stored in a safe and secure location. This may include locked cabinets, but the area should be well-ventilated. Chemicals should be stored in a tidy manner and be separated according to their hazard classification. Chemicals labeled as flammable should never be stored with any chemicals labeled as an oxidizer.

10. Diluting and Mixing of Chemicals: A potential high risk is created if too little or too much of a chemical is used. The manufacturer's instructions should be followed closely. The use of premeasured chemicals or measuring devices can reduce the risk of waste and of accidents. Some chemicals should never be mixed. Consult the SDS for potential reactions prior to mixing any chemicals.

11. Signage: Safety signage should be installed in storage areas, preferably with images or pictograms so possible dangers and precautions related to the chemicals can be quickly conveyed. All should understand clearly the differences between common signal words, such as "Caution," "Warning," and "Danger."

12. Training: Prior to working with any chemical, a worker should be adequately trained to handle safely all chemicals required for his assignment. When training has been completed, a record of the training should be kept, which would include the date, the material covered, and the names of each participant. Refresher training should be provided periodically and when any changes to the chemicals or environment are made so that those handling and working with chemicals are kept up-to-date on safety measures related to health, physical, or environmental hazards posed by chemicals.