

When used safely, chemicals can be important tools that help workers complete their daily job tasks. But when warnings are ignored, chemicals can cause hazardous short-term side effects and even severe injuries or illness.

- Read the container label before using any chemical product. Understand the warnings and follow the instructions for use.
- Refer to the safety data sheet (SDS) for additional information on any chemical used at work. The SDS will communicate proper handling and storage procedures, emergency response actions, and first aid guidance.
- Always wear recommended personal protective equipment (PPE) when using chemicals. The container label and the SDS will tell you what PPE to use, which might include gloves, goggles, protective clothing, or respiratory protection.
- Never mix cleaning products, especially products that contain bleach and ammonia. Dangerous gases can be released that when inhaled can cause severe lung damage.
- Never use chemicals at full strength if the instructions say to dilute it.
- Always follow the exact instructions on the label to correctly dilute chemicals. Never exceed the dilution ratio for concentrated chemicals.
- Only use chemicals in work areas that are well-ventilated and have good air distribution or exhaust systems.
- Store chemicals in their original containers in a cool, dry place, or in a storage location advised on the label or SDS. Keep chemical containers closed when they are not in use.

Workers that handle chemicals or are in a work environment where chemicals are used, have a right to know the dangers of those chemicals.

- The more workers know about a hazardous material, the better equipped they are to safely work with that material.



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## Discussion

***What information can you expect to find on a safety data sheet?***

***When handling chemicals, why is a well-ventilated work area important?***