FORMALDEHYDE - CH₂O

OTHER NAMES AND SOURCES
formalin (formaldehyde in water)
paraform (polymer of formaldehyde)
methylene glycol (hydrated formaldehyde)
methyl aldehyde

USES
On campus: fixation of animal or plant tissue, RNA analyses, and as a fumigant in biological cabinets and animal rooms.
General uses: resins, plastics, textiles, disinfectant, embalming agents, drug testing, photography, automotive industry

HAZARDS
Highly toxic to humans and wildlife if swallowed, inhaled, or in contact with skin.
Carcinogenic: May cause cancer and genetic defects.
Corrosive and irritant: Can cause severe skin burns and eye damage. Repeated exposures to low levels can cause sensitization, an allergic reaction due to prior contact.

HAZARDS

REDUCE RISKS
May require medical monitoring. Complete a Hazard Inventory form.
http://www.ehs.iastate.edu/forms/hazardinventory.pdf
Never work alone.
Use only in a fume hood, well-ventilated area, or with a respirator.
Wear goggles, gloves, lab coat, and fully enclosed shoes.
Keep away from heat/sparks/open flame/hot surfaces—this is a combustible liquid.
Choose gloves appropriate to the hazard using...C₃D₂

IN CASE OF EXPOSURE
Signs and Symptoms: watery eyes, burning sensation in eyes, nose and throat, skin rashes, nausea, coughing, chest tightness, and allergic reaction

Ensure there is an eyewash and safety shower within 10 seconds of the work area.
Skin exposure: Remove contaminated clothing, wash with soap and water. Seek immediate medical assistance.
If swallowed: Do not induce vomiting, rinse mouth with water and seek immediate medical assistance.
If inhaled: Move the person to fresh air and seek medical attention.

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