

NBSIA Member Services Safety Bulletin

February 2021

SCHOOL CHEMICALS

Schools house a variety of chemicals from elementary school maintenance storage closets to high school chemistry laboratories. Many of these chemicals are hazardous and are used daily. Ensuring these chemicals are managed properly helps you to safeguard the health and safety of students and staff.



Establish a Chemical Storage and Handling policy that addresses:

- How to label, store and secure chemicals
- Who should have access to these chemicals and identify chemical storage locations
- Conduct annual inspections of classrooms, janitorial closets, chemical storage rooms and cabinets to ensure the integrity of chemicals and storage structures.
- Inspect and test emergency equipment (e.g., eye-wash stations and safety showers), fume hoods and ventilation systems/exhaust fans on at least an annual basis.
- Ensure you have MSDS information for all chemicals on site
- Train staff and students on the handling of chemicals and products to help prevent accidents and prevent exposure to harmful chemicals

The risks associated with chemical exposure depend on many factors, including the chemical's hazard level (degree of flammability, toxicity), the route of exposure (absorbed through skin, inhaled, consumed, injected), and the duration of exposure.

The term "hazardous chemicals" may include (but is not limited to) the following:

- Laboratory chemicals
- Art supplies
- Cleaning products utilized by custodial, cafeteria, and maintenance staff
- Pesticides, fertilizers, paints, solvents, fuels, degreasers, and lubricants used in building operation and maintenance.

Source: <https://www.epa.gov/schools>
https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2017-01/documents/chemical_management_resource_guide_school_administrators_508.pdf



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