

PLAYING IT

# SAFE

Be safe and healthy on the job at with these helpful tips provided by Jewell & Associates Insurance, Inc..

## Formaldehyde Safety

*Reduce your risk when exposed to this substance*

Formaldehyde is a colorless, strong-smelling chemical that is commonly used in the manufacturing of building materials and numerous other products. Those products include chemicals, particleboard, household products, glues, permanent press fabrics, paper product coatings, fiberboard and plywood. It is also widely used as an industrial fungicide, germicide and disinfectant.

### Formaldehyde Hazards

Formaldehyde is a sensitizing agent that can cause a negative response in your immune system upon initial exposure.

When exposure is severe, it causes a strong irritation to the eyes, nose and throat, and can make you cough and wheeze. This reaction can be more serious for those with asthma.

Further exposure may cause a severe allergic reaction of the skin, eyes and respiratory tract. It is also linked with nasal and lung cancer. Beyond that, ingestion of formaldehyde can be fatal. When exposure is in excess of 100 parts per million (ppm), there is an immediate danger to your life.

### Exposure Risks

Workers can inhale formaldehyde as a gas or vapor, or absorb it through the skin in liquid form. You can also be exposed during the treatment of

textiles and production of resins, or during the manufacturing of any of the products listed above.

### Safety Precautions

- Label all mixtures or solutions that are composed of greater than 0.1 percent formaldehyde and materials capable of releasing the gas into the air at concentrations at or above 0.1 ppm. For all materials capable of releasing formaldehyde at levels above 0.5 ppm during normal use, the label must contain the words "potential cancer hazard."
- Select, maintain and wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), such as long sleeves, gloves, aprons, a respirator or mask, and chemical splash goggles to prevent skin and eye contact.
- Know where showers and eyewash stations are located in the workplace in case you are exposed to formaldehyde.



### Don't Take a Chance!

Formaldehyde is extremely hazardous, so always wear your PPE and follow all safety precautions when there is a chance of exposure. If you smell something particularly pungent or foul, alert your supervisor immediately.

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