

BENZENE

What is Benzene (C₆H₆)?

- Ranks in the top 20 chemicals for production volume in the United States.
- Formed from natural sources including volcanoes and forest fires.
- Benzene is also a natural part of crude oil, gasoline, and cigarette smoke.

Common Uses

- Used to make other chemicals which are used to make plastics, resins, and nylon; some types of rubbers, lubricants, detergents, drugs, and pesticides.
- Glues, paints, furniture wax, detergents.

Chemical Information

- Colorless or light yellow liquid at room temperature.
- Sweet odor.
- Highly toxic.
- Flammable and dangerous fire risk.
- Known to be a human carcinogen.
- Slightly soluble in water.

Stability & Reactivity

- Reacts violently with iodine pentafluoride.
- Reacts explosively with bromine pentafluoride, chlorine, chlorine trifluoride, diborane, nitric acid, nitryl perchlorate, oxygen (liquid), ozone, and silver perchlorate.

Handling & Storage

- Store in well closed containers in a cool place.
- Store away from fire.

Hazards Identification

ACUTE EXPOSURE:

- Mildly irritating to skin, eyes, and respiratory tract.
- Inhalation may cause headache, drowsiness, dizziness, confusion, nausea, tremors, and blurred vision.
- Exposure to high concentrations may cause convulsions, staggering gait, and unconsciousness.
- Can cause skin irritation and can dry out skin after prolonged or repeated contact with the liquid.
- Ingestion can cause stomach irritation, vomiting, dizziness, sleepiness, and rapid or irregular heartbeat.
- High concentrations of benzene vapor can cause eye irritation and visual blurring.

CHRONIC EXPOSURE:

- May cause anemia, excessive bleeding alterations to the immune system, and leukemia.
- Women may experience irregular menstrual periods and a decrease in ovary size.



1-800-222-1222

For assistance managing exposures to hazardous substances, please call North Carolina Poison Control at 1-800-222-1222.

In case of a life threatening emergency, dial 9-1-1 immediately.



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