



VITALS

A Weekly Safety Newsletter For Medical Transport Professionals

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Know What You're Getting Into! Part 2

If an MSDS follows the OSHA Form 20 format, it addresses nine basic areas. We'll use an MSDS for nitroaniline as an example, but omit chemical and scientific details. Later in the series we'll address clinical issues in greater detail. Remember this MSDS is an example only and not a recommended format.

Fire and explosion data

Fire and explosion data includes flash point, freezing point, upper explosive limit and lower explosive limit.

Health Hazards

Fatal if ingested, inhaled or absorbed through the skin. Don't get in eyes. May cause severe irritation, blisters and burns on prolonged contact. May cause liver damage. Remove contaminated clothing, shoes and flush with copious amounts of water. Move to fresh air. Contact a physician immediately.

Substance identification

Substance identification tells you what the material is, in this case, p-Nitroaniline. This section usually includes the CAS registry number, 100-01-6. The Chemical Abstract Services (CAS) is a division of the American Chemical Society. It assigns a unique identifier for chemical compounds, biological sequences, mixtures and polymers. The number is designed to make data base searches easier. As of January 2008, there were 33,565,050 substances in the registry. About 50,000 new numbers are added weekly.

Hazardous Components

Hazardous Components identifies chemical compounds, elements, biological organisms and physical hazards associated with a substance.

Physical data

Physical data includes boiling point, vapor pressure, melting point, color, odor, texture, corrosiveness and viscosity.

Reactivity data

Reactive data lists the effect of light, heat, vibration (shock), and moisture on chemical composition and stability.

Spill or leak procedures

Wear SCBA and rubber gloves. Mix with solid sodium bicarbonate, sweep up, wrap in paper and burn in an incinerator providing environmental regulations permit.

Special protection

Approved Organic Vapor Mask or SCBA. Protective gloves and safety goggles.

Special precautions

Keep container tightly closed. Refrigerate and store under nitrogen. Keep away from heat sparks and open flame.

In 1993 the American National Standards Institute(ANSI Z400.1:1993) issued a 16-section format for MSDSs containing similar information. More to come

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