

Toolbox Talk No: 281			
Issue:	Hazardous Chemicals in the Rail Network		
Location:	Via SMS Text Message, MRG Employee Portal	Date:	7/10/2025
Briefed by:	Via SMS and Portal	Time:	10.30
Points Raised and Comments			
Incident Example A rail maintenance worker was exposed to chemical fumes while applying an epoxy-based adhesive in a confined tunnel area without adequate ventilation. The worker experienced dizziness, nausea, and throat irritation. Why the Incident Happened • The worker failed to follow the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) requirements for ventilation. • The area was not properly ventilated or isolated. • Appropriate respiratory protection was not used. • The chemical was decanted into an unlabelled container, increasing the risk of misuse. What are Hazardous Chemicals? Hazardous chemicals include any substances that may pose a risk to health, safety, or the environment. These can include paints, solvents, adhesives, fuels, cleaning agents, and corrosives used in rail construction and maintenance. Exposure can occur through inhalation, skin contact, ingestion, or absorption, and may cause burns, respiratory issues, poisoning, or long-term health effects. Hazards / Causes • Inhalation of fumes, vapours, or dust in enclosed areas. • Contact with skin or eyes from splashes or spills. • Improper storage or mixing of incompatible chemicals. • Poor housekeeping or lack of spill containment. • Failure to label or secure chemical containers. Prevention / Controls • Review the SDS before using any chemical and understand the control measures. • Conduct a risk assessment for the chemical use area (especially tunnels, pits, or confined spaces). • Wear appropriate PPE – gloves, goggles, respirator, and protective clothing. • Ensure ventilation or extraction systems are working effectively. • Label all containers and do not decant into unmarked bottles. • Store chemicals properly – away from heat, ignition sources, and incompatible substances. • Dispose of waste through approved channels following environmental procedures. • Report any spills or leaks immediately and follow the spill response procedure.			

MS – Toolbox Meeting Records				MRG-CF-TCR-07
Rev: 2.0	Next Rev Date: July 2028	Issue Date:	July 2024	

Emergency Procedures

- If exposed, move the person to fresh air immediately and seek medical attention.
- In case of spills, use the appropriate spill kit and PPE.
- Isolate the area and prevent others from entering until it is safe.
- Report all chemical incidents immediately to the Supervisor and complete an incident report.

Key Takeaways

- Always Stop, Think, and Assess the chemical hazards before starting work.
- Follow all SDS instructions, SWMS, and site-specific rail safety procedures.
- Maintain good ventilation and housekeeping at all times.
- Never handle or mix chemicals without full understanding of their risks.
- Look out for your mates—if you notice strong odours or unsafe conditions, speak up.

**If you are unsure what to do following an incident, please contact:
Michael Petrovski 0478 983 823 or Chris Cakovski 0434 531 255**