UCR Environmental Health & Safety

Spotlight On Safety

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GLYCOL ETHERS (Cellosolves®)

Glycol ethers have many uses; these include use as solvents and as an ingredient in cleaning compounds, liquid soaps, and cosmetics. Acute (short-term) exposure to high levels of the glycol ethers in humans results in narcosis, pulmonary edema, and severe liver and kidney damage. It is also a reproductive hazard.

List of Glycol Ethers

- Ethylene glycol ethyl ether (EGEE, ethylene glycol monoethyl ether, ethoxyethanol, Cellosolve®)
- Ethylene glycol ethyl ether acetate (EGEEA, ethylene glycol monoethyl ether acetate, ethoxyethanol acetate, Cellosolve Acetate®)
- Ethylene glycol methyl ether (EGME, ethylene glycol monomethyl ether, methoxyethanol, Methyl Cellosolve®)
- Ethylene glycol methyl ether acetate (EGMEA, ethylene glycol monomethyl ether acetate, methoxyethanol acetate, Methyl Cellosolve Acetate®)
- Ethylene glycol dimethyl ether (EGDME)
- Ethylene glycol diethyl ether (EGDEE)
- Diethylene glycol dimethyl ether (DEGDME)
- Diethylene glycol diethyl ether (DEGDEE)
- Triethylene glycol dimethyl ether (TEGDME)

Hazards of Listed Glycol Ethers

- Reproductive and developmental toxicity is based on results of animal studies.
- Recent studies in the semi-conductor industry indicate that these glycol ethers could have similar effects at very low exposure levels in humans

Safety Practices

- Use heavy butyl rubber gloves to prevent skin contact
- Keep the material covered and work in a hood to prevent respiratory exposure
- Review the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) prior to working with glycol ethers
- Call EH&S at 951-827-5528 prior to working with glycol ethers for assistance in developing safety practices

For more information please visit www.ehs.ucr.edu or call 951-827-5528.