Right to Know

Hazardous Substance Fact Sheet

Common Name: **AMMONIUM POLYSULFIDE**

Synonyms: Diammonium Polysulfide

Chemical Name: Ammonium Sulfide

Date: April 2000 Revision: January 2010

CAS Number: 9080-17-5

RTK Substance Number: 0113

DOT Number: UN 2818

EMERGENCY RESPONDERS >>>> SEE LAST PAGE

Description and Use

Ammonium Polysulfide is a clear, yellow to red liquid with a rotten egg or *Ammonia*-like odor. It is used as an analytical reagent and an insecticide.

Hazard Summary

Hazard Rating	NJDOH	NFPA
HEALTH	3	-
FLAMMABILITY	0	-
REACTIVITY	1	-

CORROSIVE
POISONOUS GASES ARE PRODUCED IN FIRE

Hazard Rating Key: 0=minimal; 1=slight; 2=moderate; 3=serious; 4=severe

Reasons for Citation

- **Ammonium Polysulfide** is on the Right to Know Hazardous Substance List because it is cited by DOT.
- This chemical is on the Special Health Hazard Substance List.

- **Ammonium Polysulfide** can affect you when inhaled and by passing through the skin.
- Contact can severely irritate and burn the skin and eyes with possible eye damage.
- Inhaling **Ammonium Polysulfide** can irritate the nose, throat and lungs.
- Exposure to **Ammonium Polysulfide** can cause headache, dizziness, nausea and vomiting.
- **Ammonium Polysulfide** can release *Hydrogen Sulfide* Consult *the Right to Know Hazardous Substance Fact Sheet on HYDROGEN SULFIDE*.
- **Ammonium Polysulfide** is a DOT CORROSIVE material.

SEE GLOSSARY ON PAGE 5.

FIRST AID

Eye Contact

- Immediately flush with large amounts of water for at least 30 minutes, lifting upper and lower lids. Remove contact lenses, if worn, while flushing. Seek medical attention.

Skin Contact

- Quickly remove contaminated clothing. Immediately wash contaminated skin with large amounts of water. Seek medical attention.

Inhalation

- Remove the person from exposure.
- Begin rescue breathing (using universal precautions) if breathing has stopped and CPR if heart action has stopped.
- Transfer promptly to a medical facility.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222

CHEMTREC: 1-800-424-9300

NJDEP Hotline: 1-877-927-6337

National Response Center: 1-800-424-8802

Workplace Exposure Limits

The following exposure limits are for *Hydrogen Sulfide*:

OSHA: The legal airborne permissible exposure limit (PEL) is **20 ppm** and **50 ppm** as maximum peak, not to be exceeded during any 10-minute work period.

NIOSH: The recommended airborne exposure limit (REL) is **10 ppm**, which should not be exceeded during any 10-minute work period.

ACGIH: The threshold limit value (TLV) is **1 ppm** averaged over an 8-hour workshift and **5 ppm** as a STEL (short-term exposure limit).

- It should be recognized that **Ammonium Polysulfide** can be absorbed through your skin, thereby increasing your exposure.

Determining Your Exposure

- Read the product manufacturer's Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) and the label to determine product ingredients and important safety and health information about the product mixture.
- For each individual hazardous ingredient, read the New Jersey Department of Health Hazardous Substance Fact Sheet, available on the RTK website (www.nj.gov/health/eoh/rtkweb) or in your facility's RTK Central File or Hazard Communication Standard file.
- You have a right to this information under the New Jersey Worker and Community Right to Know Act and the Public Employees Occupational Safety and Health (PEOSH) Act if you are a public worker in New Jersey, and under the federal Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) if you are a private worker.
- The New Jersey Right to Know Act requires most employers to label chemicals in the workplace and requires public employers to provide their employees with information concerning chemical hazards and controls. The federal OSHA Hazard Communication Standard (29 CFR 1910.1200) and the PEOSH Hazard Communication Standard (N.J.A.C. 12:100-7) require employers to provide similar information and training to their employees.

This Fact Sheet is a summary of available information regarding the health hazards that may result from exposure. Duration of exposure, concentration of the substance and other factors will affect your susceptibility to any of the potential effects described below.

Health Hazard Information

Acute Health Effects
The following acute (short-term) health effects may occur immediately or shortly after exposure to **Ammonium Polysulfide**:

- Contact can severely irritate and burn the skin and eyes with possible eye damage.
- Inhaling **Ammonium Polysulfide** can irritate the nose, throat and lungs causing coughing, wheezing and/or shortness of breath.
- Exposure to **Ammonium Polysulfide** can cause headache, dizziness, nausea and vomiting.

Chronic Health Effects
The following chronic (long-term) health effects can occur at some time after exposure to **Ammonium Polysulfide** and can last for months or years:

Cancer Hazard
- According to the information presently available to the New Jersey Department of Health, **Ammonium Polysulfide** has not been tested for its ability to cause cancer in animals.

Reproductive Hazard
- According to the information presently available to the New Jersey Department of Health, **Ammonium Polysulfide** has not been tested for its ability to affect reproduction.

Other Effects
- **Ammonium Polysulfide** can irritate the lungs. Repeated exposure may cause bronchitis to develop with coughing, phlegm, and/or shortness of breath.

Medical

Medical Testing
If symptoms develop or overexposure is suspected, the following are recommended:

- Lung function tests

Any evaluation should include a careful history of past and present symptoms with an exam. Medical tests that look for damage already done are not a substitute for controlling exposure.

Request copies of your medical testing. You have a legal right to this information under the OSHA Access to Employee Exposure and Medical Records Standard (29 CFR 1910.1020).

Mixed Exposures
- Smoking can cause heart disease, lung cancer, emphysema, and other respiratory problems. It may worsen respiratory conditions caused by chemical exposure. Even if you have smoked for a long time, stopping now will reduce your risk of developing health problems.

Workplace Controls and Practices

Very toxic chemicals, or those that are reproductive hazards or sensitizers, require expert advice on control measures if a less toxic chemical cannot be substituted. Control measures include: (1) enclosing chemical processes for severely irritating and corrosive chemicals, (2) using local exhaust ventilation for chemicals that may be harmful with a single exposure, and (3) using general ventilation to control exposures to skin and eye irritants. For further information on workplace controls, consult the NIOSH document on Control Banding at www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/ctrlbanding/.

The following work practices are also recommended:

- Label process containers.
- Provide employees with hazard information and training.
- Monitor airborne chemical concentrations.
- Use engineering controls if concentrations exceed recommended exposure levels.
- Provide eye wash fountains and emergency showers.
- Wash or shower if skin comes in contact with a hazardous material.
- Always wash at the end of the workshift.
- Change into clean clothing if clothing becomes contaminated.
- Do not take contaminated clothing home.
- Get special training to wash contaminated clothing.
- Do not eat, smoke, or drink in areas where chemicals are being handled, processed or stored.
- Wash hands carefully before eating, smoking, drinking, applying cosmetics or using the toilet.

Personal Protective Equipment

The OSHA Personal Protective Equipment Standard (29 CFR 1910.132) requires employers to determine the appropriate personal protective equipment for each hazard and to train employees on how and when to use protective equipment.

The following recommendations are only guidelines and may not apply to every situation.

Gloves and Clothing

- Avoid skin contact with **Ammonium Polysulfide**. Wear personal protective equipment made from material which can not be permeated or degraded by this substance. Safety equipment suppliers and manufacturers can provide recommendations on the most protective glove and clothing material for your operation.
- Safety equipment manufacturers recommend Butyl and Viton as glove materials for *liquid Ammonia*, and Tychem® BR, Responder®, and TK, or the equivalent, as protective clothing materials for *Ammonia* and *Hydrogen Sulfide*.
- All protective clothing (suits, gloves, footwear, headgear) should be clean, available each day, and put on before work.

Eye Protection

- Wear indirect-vent, impact and splash resistant goggles when working with liquids.
- Wear a face shield along with goggles when working with corrosive, highly irritating or toxic substances.

Respiratory Protection

Improper use of respirators is dangerous. Respirators should only be used if the employer has implemented a written program that takes into account workplace conditions, requirements for worker training, respirator fit testing, and medical exams, as described in the OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard (29 CFR 1910.134).

- For field applications check with your supervisor and your safety equipment supplier regarding the appropriate respiratory equipment.
- Where the potential exists for exposure over **1 ppm** (as *Hydrogen Sulfide*), use a NIOSH approved supplied-air respirator with a full facepiece operated in a pressure-demand or other positive-pressure mode. For increased protection use in combination with an auxiliary self-contained breathing apparatus or an emergency escape air cylinder.

Fire Hazards

If employees are expected to fight fires, they must be trained and equipped as stated in the OSHA Fire Brigades Standard (29 CFR 1910.156).

- **Ammonium Polysulfide** is noncombustible but can decompose upon heating to release highly flammable gases.
- Use dry chemical, CO_2, water spray, alcohol-resistant foam or other foam as extinguishing agents.
- POISONOUS GASES ARE PRODUCED IN FIRE, including *Nitrogen Oxides*, *Sulfur Oxides*, and *Hydrogen Sulfide*.
- Use water spray to keep fire-exposed containers cool.

Spills and Emergencies

If employees are required to clean-up spills, they must be properly trained and equipped. The OSHA Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response Standard (29 CFR 1910.120) may apply.

If **Ammonium Polysulfide** is spilled or leaked, take the following steps:

- Evacuate personnel and secure and control entrance to the area.
- Eliminate all ignition sources.
- Absorb liquid with fly ash, cement powder or commercial sorbent and place into sealed container for disposal.
- Ventilate and wash area after clean-up is complete.
- DO NOT wash into sewer.
- It may be necessary to contain and dispose of **Ammonium Polysulfide** as a HAZARDOUS WASTE. Contact your state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) or your regional office of the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for specific recommendations.

Handling and Storage

Prior to working with **Ammonium Polysulfide** you should be trained on its proper handling and storage.

- **Ammonium Polysulfide** reacts with STRONG ACIDS (such as HYDROCHLORIC, SULFURIC and NITRIC) to form flammable and toxic *Hydrogen Sulfide gas*.
- **Ammonium Polysulfide** reacts with STRONG BASES (such as SODIUM HYDROXIDE and POTASSIUM HYDROXIDE) to form *Ammonia*.
- **Ammonium Polysulfide** is not compatible with OXIDIZING AGENTS (such as PERCHLORATES, PEROXIDES, PERMANGANATES, CHLORATES, NITRATES, CHLORINE, BROMINE and FLUORINE) and METALS.
- Store in tightly closed containers in a cool, well-ventilated area away from AIR, HEAT, LIGHT and WATER.

Occupational Health Information Resources

The New Jersey Department of Health offers multiple services in occupational health. These services include providing informational resources, educational materials, public presentations, and industrial hygiene and medical investigations and evaluations.

For more information, please contact:

New Jersey Department of Health
Right to Know
PO Box 368
Trenton, NJ 08625-0368
Phone: 609-984-2202
Fax: 609-984-7407
E-mail: rtk@doh.state.nj.us
Web address: http://www.nj.gov/health/eoh/rtkweb

GLOSSARY

ACGIH is the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists. They publish guidelines called Threshold Limit Values (TLVs) for exposure to workplace chemicals.

Acute Exposure Guideline Levels (AEGLs) are established by the EPA. They describe the risk to humans resulting from once-in-a lifetime, or rare, exposure to airborne chemicals.

Boiling point is the temperature at which a substance can change its physical state from a liquid to a gas.

A **carcinogen** is a substance that causes cancer.

The **CAS number** is unique, identifying number, assigned by the Chemical Abstracts Service, to a specific chemical.

CFR is the Code of Federal Regulations, which are the regulations of the United States government.

A **combustible** substance is a solid, liquid or gas that will burn.

A **corrosive** substance is a gas, liquid or solid that causes destruction of human skin or severe corrosion of containers.

The **critical temperature** is the temperature above which a gas cannot be liquefied, regardless of the pressure applied.

DEP is the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.

DOT is the Department of Transportation, the federal agency that regulates the transportation of chemicals.

EPA is the Environmental Protection Agency, the federal agency responsible for regulating environmental hazards.

ERG is the Emergency Response Guidebook. It is a guide for emergency responders for transportation emergencies involving hazardous substances.

Emergency Response Planning Guideline (ERPG) values provide estimates of concentration ranges where one reasonably might anticipate observing adverse effects.

A **fetus** is an unborn human or animal.

A **flammable** substance is a solid, liquid, vapor or gas that will ignite easily and burn rapidly.

The **flash point** is the temperature at which a liquid or solid gives off vapor that can form a flammable mixture with air.

IARC is the International Agency for Research on Cancer, a scientific group.

Ionization Potential is the amount of energy needed to remove an electron from an atom or molecule. It is measured in electron volts.

IRIS is the Integrated Risk Information System database on human health effects that may result from exposure to various chemicals, maintained by federal EPA.

LEL or **Lower Explosive Limit**, is the lowest concentration of a combustible substance (gas or vapor) in the air capable of continuing an explosion.

mg/m^3 means milligrams of a chemical in a cubic meter of air. It is a measure of concentration (weight/volume).

A **mutagen** is a substance that causes mutations. A **mutation** is a change in the genetic material in a body cell. Mutations can lead to birth defects, miscarriages, or cancer.

NFPA is the National Fire Protection Association. It classifies substances according to their fire and explosion hazard.

NIOSH is the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. It tests equipment, evaluates and approves respirators, conducts studies of workplace hazards, and proposes standards to OSHA.

NTP is the National Toxicology Program which tests chemicals and reviews evidence for cancer.

OSHA is the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration, which adopts and enforces health and safety standards.

PEOSHA is the New Jersey Public Employees Occupational Safety and Health Act, which adopts and enforces health and safety standards in public workplaces.

Permeated is the movement of chemicals through protective materials.

ppm means parts of a substance per million parts of air. It is a measure of concentration by volume in air.

Protective Action Criteria (PAC) are values established by the Department of Energy and are based on AEGLs and ERPGs. They are used for emergency planning of chemical release events.

A **reactive** substance is a solid, liquid or gas that releases energy under certain conditions.

STEL is a Short Term Exposure Limit which is usually a 15-minute exposure that should not be exceeded at any time during a work day.

A **teratogen** is a substance that causes birth defects by damaging the fetus.

UEL or **Upper Explosive Limit** is the highest concentration in air above which there is too much fuel (gas or vapor) to begin a reaction or explosion.

Vapor Density is the ratio of the weight of a given volume of one gas to the weight of another (usually *Air*), at the same temperature and pressure.

The **vapor pressure** is a force exerted by the vapor in equilibrium with the solid or liquid phase of the same substance. The higher the vapor pressure the higher concentration of the substance in air.

Right to Know Hazardous Substance Fact Sheet

Emergency Responders Quick Reference

Common Name: **AMMONIUM POLYSULFIDE**

Synonyms: Ammonium Sulfide; Diammonium Polysulfide
CAS No: 9080-17-5
Molecular Formula: $(NH_4)_2S_x$
RTK Substance No: 0113
Description: Clear, yellow to red liquid with a rotten egg or *Ammonia*-like odor

HAZARD DATA

Hazard Rating	Firefighting	Reactivity
2 - Health **0 - Fire** **1 - Reactivity** **DOT#:** UN 2818 **ERG Guide #:** 154 **Hazard Class:** 8 (Corrosive)	**Ammonium Polysulfide** is noncombustible but can decompose upon heating to release highly flammable gases. Use dry chemical, CO_2, water spray, alcohol-resistant foam or other foam as extinguishing agents. POISONOUS GASES ARE PRODUCED IN FIRE, including *Nitrogen Oxides*, *Sulfur Oxides*, and *Hydrogen Sulfide*. Use water spray to keep fire-exposed containers cool.	**Ammonium Polysulfide** reacts with STRONG ACIDS (such as HYDROCHLORIC, SULFURIC and NITRIC) to form flammable and toxic *Hydrogen Sulfide gas*. **Ammonium Polysulfide** reacts with STRONG BASES (such as SODIUM HYDROXIDE and POTASSIUM HYDROXIDE) to form *Ammonia*. **Ammonium Polysulfide** is not compatible with OXIDIZING AGENTS (such as PERCHLORATES, PEROXIDES, PERMANGANATES, CHLORATES, NITRATES, CHLORINE, BROMINE and FLUORINE) and METALS. Keep **Ammonium Polysulfide** away from AIR, HEAT, LIGHT and WATER.

SPILL/LEAKS

Isolation Distance:

Spill: 50 meters (150 feet)

Fire: 800 meters (1/2 mile)

Absorb liquid with fly ash, cement powder or commercial sorbent and place into sealed containers for disposal.

DO NOT wash into sewer.

PHYSICAL PROPERTIES

Odor Threshold: Rotten egg or *Ammonia*-like

Flash Point: Noncombustible

Boiling Point: Decomposes

Molecular Weight: Varies

EXPOSURE LIMITS

ACGIH: 1 ppm, 8-hr TWA; 5 ppm, Ceiling (for *Hydrogen Sulfide*)

PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Gloves: Butyl and Viton (>8-hr breakthrough for *liquid Ammonia*)

Coveralls: Tychem® BR, Responder®, and TK (>8-hr breakthrough for *liquid Ammonia* and *Hydrogen Sulfide*)

Respirator: SCBA

HEALTH EFFECTS

Eyes: Irritation and burns

Skin: Irritation and burns

Inhalation: Nose, throat and lung irritation with coughing, wheezing and shortness of breath

Headache, dizziness, nausea and vomiting

FIRST AID AND DECONTAMINATION

Remove the person from exposure.

Flush eyes with large amounts of water for at least 30 minutes. Remove contact lenses if worn. Seek medical attention.

Quickly remove contaminated clothing and wash contaminated skin with large amounts of water. Seek medical attention.

Begin artificial respiration if breathing has stopped and CPR if necessary.

Transfer promptly to a medical facility.