Common Name: **AFLATOXINS**

Synonyms: Aflatoxins B1, B2, G1 and G2  
Chemical Name: Aflatoxins  
Date: August 1998  
Revision: August 2008

**Description and Use**

**Aflatoxins** are a group of molds produced by the fungus *Aspergillus flavus*. They are natural contaminants of fruits, vegetables and grains. Colorless to pale yellow crystals of **Aflatoxins** are used in research.

**Reasons for Citation**

- **Aflatoxins** are on the Right to Know Hazardous Substance List because they are cited by NTP and IARC.
- This chemical is on the Special Health Hazard Substance List.

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**FIRST AID**

**Eye Contact**

- Immediately flush with large amounts of water for at least 15 minutes, lifting upper and lower lids. Remove contact lenses, if worn, while rinsing.

**Skin Contact**

- Remove contaminated clothing and wash contaminated skin with water.

**Inhalation**

- Remove the person from exposure.
- Transfer promptly to a medical facility.

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**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

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**Hazard Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hazard Rating</th>
<th>NJDOH</th>
<th>NFPA</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HEALTH</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLAMMABILITY</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REACTIVITY</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARCINOGEN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TERAUTOGEN</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hazard Rating Key:** 0=Minimal; 1=Slight; 2=Moderate; 3=Serious; 4=Severe

- **Aflatoxins** can affect you when inhaled or swallowed.
- **Aflatoxins** are CARCINOGENS and MUTAGENS and should be handled as TERAUTOGENS—WITH EXTREME CAUTION.
- Exposure to **Aflatoxins** can cause headache, nausea and vomiting.
- **Aflatoxins** may damage the liver and kidneys.

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**Workplace Exposure Limits**

No occupational exposure limits have been established for **Aflatoxins**. However, they may pose a health risk. Always follow safe work practices.

- **Aflatoxins** are CARCINOGENS in humans. There may be no safe level of exposure to a carcinogen, so all contact should be reduced to the lowest possible level.
**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](http://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, 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 Aflatoxins:

- Exposure to Aflatoxins can cause headache, nausea and vomiting.

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

**Cancer Hazard**
- Aflatoxins are CARCINOGENS in humans. They have been shown to cause liver cancer.
- Many scientists believe there is no safe level of exposure to a carcinogen.

**Reproductive Hazard**
- Aflatoxins may be TERATOGENS in humans since they have been shown to be teratogens in animals.

**Other Effects**
- Aflatoxins may damage the liver and kidneys.

### Medical

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

- Liver and kidney 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**
- More than light alcohol consumption can cause liver damage. Drinking alcohol may increase the liver damage caused by Aflatoxins.
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.
- 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.

In addition, the following may be useful or required:

- Use a Class I, Type B, biological safety hood when mixing, handling, or preparing Aflatoxins.
- Use a vacuum or a wet method to reduce dust during clean-up. DO NOT DRY SWEEP.
- Use a high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter when vacuuming. Do not use a standard shop vacuum.

Eye Protection

- Wear eye protection with side shields or goggles.
- 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).

- Where the potential exists for exposure to Aflatoxins, use a NIOSH approved negative pressure, air purifying, particulate filter respirator. The filter classifications of dust/mist/fume, paint spray or pesticide prefilters, and filters for radon daughters, have been replaced with the N, R, and P series. Each series has three levels of filtering efficiency: 95%, 99%, and 99.9%.
- Leave the area immediately if (1) while wearing a filter or cartridge respirator you can smell, taste, or otherwise detect Aflatoxins, (2) while wearing particulate filters abnormal resistance to breathing is experienced, or (3) eye irritation occurs while wearing a full facepiece respirator. Check to make sure the respirator-to-face seal is still good. If it is, replace the filter or cartridge. If the seal is no longer good, you may need a new respirator.
- Consider all potential sources of exposure in your workplace. You may need a combination of filters, prefilters or cartridges to protect against different forms of a chemical (such as vapor and mist) or against a mixture of chemicals.
- Where the potential for high exposure exists, 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 operated in a pressure-demand or other positive-pressure mode.

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).

- Aflatoxins may be COMBUSTIBLE in liquid form.
- Use dry chemical, CO₂, water spray or foam as extinguishing agents.

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 Aflatoxins. Wear personal protective equipment made from material that 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 Nitrile and Natural Rubber for gloves and DuPont Tyvek®, or the equivalent, as a protective material for clothing.
- All protective clothing (suits, gloves, footwear, headgear) should be clean, available each day, and put on before work.
### 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 **Aflatoxins** are spilled, take the following steps:

- Evacuate personnel and secure and control entrance to the area.
- Eliminate all ignition sources.
- Moisten spilled material first or use a HEPA-filter vacuum for clean-up and deposit into sealed containers.
- Ventilate and wash area after clean-up is complete.
- DO NOT wash into sewer.
- It may be necessary to contain and dispose of **Aflatoxins** 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 **Aflatoxins** you should be trained on its proper handling and storage.

- **Aflatoxins** are not compatible with OXIDIZING AGENTS (such as PERCHLORATES, PEROXIDES, PERMANGANATES, CHLORATES, NITRATES, CHLORINE, BROMINE and FLUORINE); STRONG ACIDS (such as HYDROCHLORIC, SULFURIC and NITRIC); STRONG BASES (such as SODIUM HYDROXIDE and POTASSIUM HYDROXIDE); AMMONIA; and AMINES.
- Store in tightly closed containers in a cool, well-ventilated area away from LIGHT and AIR.
- Sources of ignition, such as smoking and open flames, are prohibited where **Aflatoxins** are used, handled, or stored in a manner that could create a potential fire or explosion hazard.

### 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

*The Right to Know Hazardous Substance Fact Sheets are not intended to be copied and sold for commercial purposes.*
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.

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 are intended to 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 maintained by federal EPA. The database contains information on human health effects that may result from exposure to various chemicals in the environment.

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/m³ 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.

PIH is a DOT designation for chemicals which are Poison Inhalation Hazards.

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

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 Hydrogen), at the same temperature and pressure.

The vapor pressure is a measure of how readily a liquid or a solid mixes with air at its surface. A higher vapor pressure indicates a higher concentration of the substance in air and therefore increases the likelihood of breathing it in.
Common Name: **AFLATOXINS**

**Synonyms:** Aflatoxins B1, B2, G1 and G2  
**CAS No:** 1402-68-2  
**Molecular Formula:**  
- C₁₃H₁₂O₆; C₁₇H₁₄O₇; C₁₇H₁₂O₇; C₁₇H₁₄O₆

**Description:** Colorless to pale yellow crystals when used in research

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**HAZARD DATA**

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<tr>
<th>Hazard Rating</th>
<th>Firefighting</th>
<th>Reactivity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 - Health</td>
<td>May be COMBUSTIBLE in liquid form. Use dry chemical, CO₂, water spray or foam as extinguishing agents.</td>
<td>Aflatoxins are not compatible with OXIDIZING AGENTS (such as PERCHLORATES, PEROXIDES, PERMANGANATES, CHLORATES, NITRATES, CHLORINE, BROMINE and FLUORINE); STRONG ACIDS (such as HYDROCHLORIC, SULFURIC and NITRIC); STRONG BASES (such as SODIUM HYDROXIDE and POTASSIUM HYDROXIDE); AMMONIA; and AMINES.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- - Fire</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- - Reactivity</td>
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<tr>
<td>DOT#: None</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ERG Guide #: None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hazard Class: 6.1 (Poison)</td>
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</tbody>
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**SPILL/LEAKS**

**Isolation Distance:**
- Spill: 75 meters (250 feet)  
- Fire: 800 meters (1/2 mile)

Moisten spilled material first or use a HEPA-filter vacuum for clean-up and deposit into sealed containers. Ventilate and wash area after clean-up is complete. DO NOT wash into sewer. Bioaccumulation is low in aquatic life.

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**PHYSICAL PROPERTIES**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Property</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tr>
<td>Odor Threshold:</td>
<td>Not available</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flash Point:</td>
<td>May be combustible (liquid form)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Water Solubility:</td>
<td>Soluble</td>
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<tr>
<td>Melting Point:</td>
<td>514° to 516°F (268° to 269°C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molecular Weight:</td>
<td>312 to 330</td>
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**EXPOSURE LIMITS**

No occupational exposure limits have been established for **Aflatoxins**.

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**HEALTH EFFECTS**

**Eyes:** No information  
**Skin:** No information  
**Inhalation:** Headache, nausea and vomiting  
**Chronic:** Cancer (liver) in humans

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**FIRST AID AND DECONTAMINATION**

- **Remove** the person from exposure.  
- **Flush** eyes with large amounts of water for at least 15 minutes. Remove contact lenses if worn.  
- **Remove** contaminated clothing and wash contaminated skin with water.  
- **Transfer** promptly to a medical facility.