Common Name: **OXYGEN**

CAS Number: 7782-44-7  
DOT Number:  
UN 1072 (Compressed)  
UN 1073 (Refrigerated Liquid)  
DOT Hazard Class: 2.2 (Non-Flammable Gas)

**HAZARD SUMMARY**
* **Oxygen** can cause reproductive damage. Handle with extreme caution.*
* **Oxygen** may cause mutations. Handle with extreme caution.*
* Contact with liquid Oxygen can cause severe skin and eye irritation and burns as well as frostbite.*
* Breathing pure Oxygen at high pressures can cause nausea, dizziness, muscle twitching, vision loss, convulsions (fits), and loss of consciousness.*
* Breathing pure Oxygen for a long time can irritate the lungs causing coughing and/or shortness of breath. Higher exposures may cause a build-up of fluid in the lungs (pulmonary edema), a medical emergency, with severe shortness of breath.

**IDENTIFICATION**  
**Oxygen** is a colorless, odorless gas. **Liquid Oxygen** has a light blue color and is odorless. It is used for resuscitation, in welding and blast furnaces, as an oxidizer, and in many industrial processes.

**REASON FOR CITATION**
* **Oxygen** is on the Hazardous Substance List because it is cited by DOT and NFPA.  
* Definitions are provided on page 5.

**HOW TO DETERMINE IF YOU ARE BEING EXPOSED**
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 and training concerning chemical hazards and controls. The federal OSHA Hazard Communication Standard (29 CFR 1910.1200) requires private employers to provide similar training and information to their employees.

* Exposure to hazardous substances should be routinely evaluated. This may include collecting personal and area air samples. You can obtain copies of sampling results from your employer. You have a legal right to this information under the OSHA Access to Employee Exposure and Medical Records Standard (29 CFR 1910.1020).  
* If you think you are experiencing any work-related health problems, see a doctor trained to recognize occupational diseases. Take this Fact Sheet with you.

**WORKPLACE EXPOSURE LIMITS**  
**Oxygen** is naturally present at a concentration of 21% in the air we breathe. The health effects described in this Fact Sheet may occur when breathing pure Oxygen or concentrations greater than 40%.

* OSHA defines an **Oxygen**-deficient atmosphere as having less than 19.5% Oxygen by volume.  
* Always monitor Oxygen levels before entering tanks, vessels, or other confined spaces.

**WAYS OF REDUCING EXPOSURE**
* Where possible, enclose operations and use local exhaust ventilation at the site of chemical release. If local exhaust ventilation or enclosure is not used, respirators should be worn.  
* Wear protective work clothing.  
* On skin contact with liquid Oxygen, immediately submerge the affected body part in warm water.  
* Post hazard and warning information in the work area. In addition, as part of an ongoing education and training effort, communicate all information on the health and safety hazards of Oxygen to potentially exposed workers.
This Fact Sheet is a summary source of information of all potential and most severe 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 Oxygen:

* Contact with liquid Oxygen can cause severe skin and eye irritation and burns as well as frostbite.
* Breathing pure Oxygen at high pressures can cause nausea, dizziness, muscle twitching, vision loss, convulsions (fits), and loss of consciousness.
* Breathing pure Oxygen for a long time can irritate the lungs causing coughing and/or shortness of breath. Higher exposures may cause a build-up of fluid in the lungs (pulmonary edema), a medical emergency, with severe shortness of breath.

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

Cancer Hazard
* Oxygen may cause mutations (genetic changes). Whether or not it poses a cancer hazard needs further study.

Reproductive Hazard
* Oxygen may damage the developing fetus.

Other Long-Term Effects
* Oxygen has not been tested for other chronic (long-term) health effects.

MEDICAL

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

* Consider chest x-ray after acute overexposure to compressed or liquified Oxygen.

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
* Because smoking can cause heart disease, as well as 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

Unless a less toxic chemical can be substituted for a hazardous substance, ENGINEERING CONTROLS are the most effective way of reducing exposure. The best protection is to enclose operations and/or provide local exhaust ventilation at the site of chemical release. Isolating operations can also reduce exposure. Using respirators or protective equipment is less effective than the controls mentioned above, but is sometimes necessary.

In evaluating the controls present in your workplace, consider: (1) how hazardous the substance is, (2) how much of the substance is released into the workplace and (3) whether harmful skin or eye contact could occur. Special controls should be in place for highly toxic chemicals or when significant skin, eye, or breathing exposures are possible.

In addition, the following control is recommended:

* Specific engineering controls are required for this chemical by OSHA. Refer to the OSHA Oxygen Standard (29 CFR 1910.104).

Good WORK PRACTICES can help to reduce hazardous exposures. The following work practices are recommended:

* Eye wash fountains should be provided in the immediate work area for emergency use.
* If there is the possibility of skin exposure, emergency shower facilities should be provided.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

WORKPLACE CONTROLS ARE BETTER THAN PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT. However, for some jobs (such as outside work, confined space entry, jobs done only once in a while, or jobs done while workplace controls are being installed), personal protective equipment may be appropriate.

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.
Clothing
* Avoid skin contact with Oxygen. Wear protective gloves and clothing. Safety equipment suppliers/manufacturers can provide recommendations on the most protective glove/clothing material for your operation.
* Where exposure to cold equipment, vapors, or liquid may occur, employees should be provided with special clothing designed to prevent the freezing of body tissues.
* 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 liquid Oxygen.
* Wear a face shield along with goggles when working with corrosive, highly irritating or toxic substances.

Respiratory Protection
IMPROPER USE OF RESPIRATORS IS DANGEROUS.
Such equipment should only be used if the employer has 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).

* Oxygen-deficient or Oxygen-rich environments can lead to asphyxiation. Only NIOSH approved self-contained breathing apparatus with a full facepiece operated in the positive pressure mode should be used in Oxygen-deficient environments.

HANDLING AND STORAGE
* Prior to working with compressed or liquified Oxygen you should be trained on its proper handling and storage.
* Oxygen may ignite or explode on contact with COMBUSTIBLE MATERIALS (such as WOOD, PAPER, OIL, GREASE and FUELS).
* Oxygen is not compatible with HALOGENATED HYDROCARBONS (such as TRICHLOROETHANES); METALS; STRONG BASES (such as SODIUM HYDROXIDE and POTASSIUM HYDROXIDE); REDUCING AGENTS; AMINES; METAL SALTS; and OXIDIZING AGENTS (such as PERCHLORATES, PEROXIDES, PERMANGANATES, CHLORATES, NITRATES, CHLORINE, BROMINE and FLUORINE).
* Store in tightly closed containers in a cool, well-ventilated area away from HEAT.
* Clothing that becomes saturated with Oxygen becomes a severe fire hazard.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
Q: If I have acute health effects, will I later get chronic health effects?
A: Not always. Most chronic (long-term) effects result from repeated exposures to a chemical.

Q: Can I get long-term effects without ever having short-term effects?
A: Yes, because long-term effects can occur from repeated exposures to a chemical at levels not high enough to make you immediately sick.

Q: What are my chances of getting sick when I have been exposed to chemicals?
A: The likelihood of becoming sick from chemicals is increased as the amount of exposure increases. This is determined by the length of time and the amount of material to which someone is exposed.

Q: When are higher exposures more likely?
A: Conditions which increase risk of exposure include physical and mechanical processes (heating, pouring, spraying, spills and evaporation from large surface areas such as open containers), and "confined space" exposures (working inside vats, reactors, boilers, small rooms, etc.).

Q: Is the risk of getting sick higher for workers than for community residents?
A: Yes. Exposures in the community, except possibly in cases of fires or spills, are usually much lower than those found in the workplace. However, people in the community may be exposed to contaminated water as well as to chemicals in the air over long periods. This may be a problem for children or people who are already ill.
The following information is available from:

New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services
Occupational Health Service
PO Box 360
Trenton, NJ 08625-0360
(609) 984-1863
(609) 984-7407 (fax)

Web address: http://www.state.nj.us/health/ehs/odisweb/

**Industrial Hygiene Information**
Industrial hygienists are available to answer your questions regarding the control of chemical exposures using exhaust ventilation, special work practices, good housekeeping, good hygiene practices, and personal protective equipment including respirators. In addition, they can help to interpret the results of industrial hygiene survey data.

**Medical Evaluation**
If you think you are becoming sick because of exposure to chemicals at your workplace, you may call personnel at the Department of Health and Senior Services, Occupational Health Service, who can help you find the information you need.

**Public Presentations**
Presentations and educational programs on occupational health or the Right to Know Act can be organized for labor unions, trade associations and other groups.

**Right to Know Information Resources**
The Right to Know Infoline (609) 984-2202 can answer questions about the identity and potential health effects of chemicals, list of educational materials in occupational health, references used to prepare the Fact Sheets, preparation of the Right to Know Survey, education and training programs, labeling requirements, and general information regarding the Right to Know Act. Violations of the law should be reported to (609) 984-2202.
DEFINITIONS

**ACGIH** is the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists. It recommends upper limits (called TLVs) for exposure to workplace chemicals.

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

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

**CFR** is the Code of Federal Regulations, which consists of 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 irreversible damage to human tissue or 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.

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 that classifies chemicals according to their cancer-causing potential.

**IRIS** is the Integrated Risk Information System database of the federal EPA.

A **miscible** substance is a liquid or gas that will evenly dissolve in another.

**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.

**NAERG** is the North American Emergency Response Guidebook. It was jointly developed by Transport Canada, the United States Department of Transportation and the Secretariat of Communications and Transportation of Mexico. It is a guide for first responders to quickly identify the specific or generic hazards of material involved in a transportation incident, and to protect themselves and the general public during the initial response phase of the incident.

**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 Occupational Safety and Health Administration, which adopts and enforces health and safety standards.

**PEL** is the Permissible Exposure Limit which is enforceable by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

**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.

**TLV** is the Threshold Limit Value, the workplace exposure limit recommended by ACGIH.

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: OXYGEN
DOT Number: UN 1072 (Compressed)
UN 1073 (Refrigerated Liquid)
DOT Hazard Class: 2.2 (Non-Flammable Gas)
NAERG Code: 122
CAS Number: 7782-44-7

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INCREASES INTENSITY OF FIRE
CONTAINERS MAY EXPLODE IN FIRE

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

FIRE HAZARDS

* Oxygen is not flammable but supports combustion and greatly INCREASES THE INTENSITY OF FIRE. Liquid Oxygen and COMBUSTIBLES are HIGHLY EXPLOSIVE.
* Extinguish fire using an agent suitable for type of surrounding fire.
* CONTAINERS MAY EXPLODE IN FIRE.
* Use water spray to keep fire-exposed containers cool.
* 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).

SPILLS AND EMERGENCIES

If Oxygen gas or liquid is leaked, take the following steps:

* Evacuate personnel and secure and control entrance to the area.
* Eliminate all ignition sources.
* Ventilate area of leak to disperse the gas.
* Stop flow of gas. If source of leak is a cylinder and the leak cannot be stopped in place, remove the leaking cylinder to a safe place in the open air, and repair leak or allow cylinder to empty.
* Keep COMBUSTIBLES (WOOD, PAPER, OIL, GREASE and FUELS) away from spill.
* It may be necessary to contain and dispose of Oxygen 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.
* 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.

FOR LARGE SPILLS AND FIRES immediately call your fire department. You can request emergency information from the following:

CHEMTREC: (800) 424-9300
NJDEP HOTLINE: 1-877-WARN-DEP

HANDLING AND STORAGE (See page 3)

FIRST AID

For POISON INFORMATION call 1-800-222-1222

Eye Contact
* Immediately flush with large amounts of water for at least 15 minutes, occasionally lifting upper and lower lids. Seek medical attention immediately.

Skin Contact
* Immerse affected part in warm water. Seek medical attention.

Breathing
* 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.
* Medical observation is recommended for 24 to 48 hours after breathing overexposure, as pulmonary edema may be delayed.

PHYSICAL DATA

Water Solubility: Liquid Oxygen sinks and boils in water

OTHER COMMONLY USED NAMES

Chemical Name:
Oxygen

Not intended to be copied and sold for commercial purposes.

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SENIOR SERVICES

Right to Know Program
PO Box 368, Trenton, NJ 08625-0368
(609) 984-2202