



Right to Know Hazardous Substance Fact Sheet

Common Name: **BORON TRIFLUORIDE**

Synonyms: Boron Fluoride; Trifluoroborane

Chemical Name: Borane, Trifluoro-

Date: July 2002

Revision: February 2012

CAS Number: 7637-07-2

RTK Substance Number: 0246

DOT Number: UN 1008

Description and Use

Boron Trifluoride is a colorless gas, with a strong odor, that forms dense, white fumes in moist air. It is used as a catalyst for polymerization reactions, in soldering fluxes and fiber optics, and as a fire extinguishing agent for *Magnesium*.

- ▶ **ODOR THRESHOLD = 1.6 ppm**
- ▶ Odor thresholds vary greatly. Do not rely on odor alone to determine potentially hazardous exposures.

Reasons for Citation

- ▶ **Boron Trifluoride** is on the Right to Know Hazardous Substance List because it is cited by OSHA, ACGIH, DOT, NIOSH, DEP, IRIS, NFPA and EPA.

[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.
- ▶ In case of contact with *liquid Boron Trifluoride*, immerse affected part in warm 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.
- ▶ Medical observation is recommended for 24 to 48 hours after overexposure, as pulmonary edema may be delayed.

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

EMERGENCY RESPONDERS >>>> SEE LAST PAGE

Hazard Summary

Hazard Rating	NJDOH	NFPA
HEALTH	-	4
FLAMMABILITY	-	0
REACTIVITY	-	1
CORROSIVE POISONOUS GASES ARE PRODUCED IN FIRE CONTAINERS MAY EXPLODE IN FIRE		

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

- ▶ **Boron Trifluoride** can affect you when inhaled and by passing through the skin.
- ▶ **Boron Trifluoride** is a CORROSIVE chemical and contact can severely irritate and burn the skin and eyes with possible eye damage.
- ▶ Skin contact with *liquid Boron Trifluoride* can cause frostbite.
- ▶ Inhaling **Boron Trifluoride** can irritate the nose and throat. Repeated exposure can cause dryness of the nose and nosebleeds.
- ▶ Inhaling **Boron Trifluoride** can irritate the lungs. Higher exposures may cause a build-up of fluid in the lungs (pulmonary edema), a medical emergency.
- ▶ Exposure to **Boron Trifluoride** can cause headache, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.
- ▶ **Boron Trifluoride** may damage the kidneys and affect the nervous system.
- ▶ Repeated very high exposure to **Boron Trifluoride** may cause the deposit of *Fluoride* in the bones and teeth, a condition called *Fluorosis*. The above health effects do NOT occur at the level of *Fluoride* used in water to prevent cavities in teeth.
- ▶ If **Boron Trifluoride** is involved in a fire it can release *Hydrogen Fluoride*. Consult the *Right to Know Hazardous Substance Fact Sheet on HYDROGEN FLUORIDE*.

Workplace Exposure Limits

OSHA: The legal airborne permissible exposure limit (PEL) is **1 ppm**, not to be exceeded at any time.

NIOSH: The recommended airborne exposure limit (REL) is **1 ppm**, which should not be exceeded at any time.

ACGIH: The threshold limit value (TLV) is **1 ppm**, which should not be exceeded at any time.

- ▶ The above exposure limits are for air levels only. When skin contact also occurs, you may be overexposed, even though air levels are less than the limits listed above.

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 **Boron Trifluoride**:

- ▶ Contact can severely irritate and burn the skin and eyes with possible eye damage.
- ▶ Skin contact with *liquid Boron Trifluoride* can cause frostbite.
- ▶ Inhaling **Boron Trifluoride** can irritate the nose and throat.
- ▶ Inhaling **Boron Trifluoride** 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.
- ▶ Exposure to **Boron Trifluoride** can cause headache, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

Chronic Health Effects

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

Cancer Hazard

- ▶ According to the information presently available to the New Jersey Department of Health, **Boron Trifluoride** 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, **Boron Trifluoride** has not been tested for its ability to affect reproduction.

Other Effects

- ▶ Repeated exposure can cause dryness of the nose and nosebleeds.
- ▶ **Boron Trifluoride** can irritate the lungs. Repeated exposure may cause bronchitis to develop with coughing, phlegm, and/or shortness of breath.
- ▶ **Boron Trifluoride** may damage the kidneys and affect the nervous system.
- ▶ Repeated, very high exposure to **Boron Trifluoride** can cause the deposit of *Fluoride* in the bones and teeth, a condition called *Fluorosis*. This may cause pain, disability and mottling of the teeth.

Medical

Medical Testing

For frequent or potentially high exposure (half the PEL or greater), the following are recommended before beginning work and at regular times after that:

- ▶ *Fluoride* levels in urine higher than **4 mg/liter** indicate overexposure

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

- ▶ Lung function tests
- ▶ 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.

You have a legal right to request copies of your medical testing 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.

In addition, the following may be useful or required:

- ▶ Specific actions are required for this chemical by OSHA. Refer to the OSHA *Compressed gases* Standard (29 CFR 1910.101).
- ▶ Where possible, transfer **Boron Trifluoride** from cylinders or other containers to process containers in an enclosed system.

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 **Boron Trifluoride**. 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.
- ▶ The recommended glove material for **Boron Trifluoride** is Viton/Butyl.
- ▶ The recommended protective clothing materials for **Boron Trifluoride** are Tychem® BR, CSM and TK, or the equivalent.

- ▶ Where exposure to cold equipment, vapors, or liquid may occur, employees should be provided with *insulated* gloves and 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 non-vented goggles when working with liquids that splash or when vapors and/or fumes are present. A face shield is also required if the liquid is severely irritating or corrosive to the skin and eyes.
- ▶ Do not wear contact lenses when working with this substance.

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 over **1 ppm**, use a 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.
- ▶ Exposure to **25 ppm** is immediately dangerous to life and health. If the possibility of exposure above **25 ppm** exists, use a self-contained breathing apparatus with a full facepiece operated in a pressure-demand or other positive-pressure mode equipped with 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).

- ▶ Extinguish fire using an agent suitable for type of surrounding fire. **Boron Trifluoride** itself does not burn.
- ▶ Stop flow of gas and use water spray to disperse vapors.
- ▶ POISONOUS GASES ARE PRODUCED IN FIRE, including *Hydrogen Fluoride* and *Boric Acid*.
- ▶ CONTAINERS MAY EXPLODE IN FIRE.
- ▶ Use water spray to keep fire-exposed containers cool.
- ▶ **Boron Trifluoride** may be shipped or stored in complexes with flammable solvents (such as *Ethyl Ether*). These complexes may be a fire risk.

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 **Boron Trifluoride** is leaked, take the following steps:

- ▶ Evacuate personnel and secure and control entrance to the area.
- ▶ Eliminate 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.
- ▶ It may be necessary to contain and dispose of **Boron Trifluoride** 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 **Boron Trifluoride** you should be trained on its proper handling and storage.

- ▶ **Boron Trifluoride** reacts with WATER to form toxic *Hydrogen Fluoride gas*.
- ▶ **Boron Trifluoride** reacts violently with ALKALI METALS (such as LITHIUM, SODIUM and POTASSIUM); ALKYL NITRATES (such as AMYL NITRATE, BUTYL NITRATE and NITROCELLULOSE); CALCIUM OXIDE; and LIME (CALCIUM HYDROXIDE).
- ▶ **Boron Trifluoride** attacks many METALS in the presence of WATER.
- ▶ Store in tightly closed containers in a cool, well-ventilated area and protect from temperatures above 125°F (52°C).

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 (AEGs) 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/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.

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 AEGs 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.

Common Name: **BORON TRIFLUORIDE**

Synonyms: Borane, Trifluoro-; Boron Fluoride; Trifluoroborane

CAS No: 7637-07-2

 Molecular Formula: BF₃

RTK Substance No: 0246

Description: Colorless gas with a strong odor that forms dense, white fumes in moist air

HAZARD DATA

Hazard Rating	Firefighting	Reactivity
4 - Health 0 - Fire 1 - Reactivity DOT#: UN 1008 ERG Guide #: 125 Hazard Class: 2.3 (Poisonous gas)	CORROSIVE Extinguish fire using an agent suitable for type of surrounding fire. Boron Trifluoride itself does not burn. Stop flow of gas and use water spray to disperse vapors. POISONOUS GASES ARE PRODUCED IN FIRE, including <i>Hydrogen Fluoride</i> and <i>Boric Acid</i> . CONTAINERS MAY EXPLODE IN FIRE. Use water spray to keep fire-exposed containers cool. Boron Trifluoride may be shipped or stored in complexes with flammable solvents (such as <i>Ethyl Ether</i>). These complexes may be a fire risk.	Boron Trifluoride reacts with WATER to form toxic <i>Hydrogen Fluoride gas</i> . Boron Trifluoride reacts violently with ALKALI METALS (such as LITHIUM, SODIUM and POTASSIUM); ALKYL NITRATES (such as AMYL NITRATE, BUTYL NITRATE and NITROCELLULOSE); CALCIUM OXIDE; and LIME (CALCIUM HYDROXIDE). Boron Trifluoride attacks many METALS in the presence of WATER.

SPILL/LEAKS

Isolation Distance:
Small spill: 30 meters (100 feet)

Large spill: 150 meters (500 feet)

Fire: 1,600 meters (1 mile)

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.

Boron Trifluoride may be hazardous to the environment, especially to aquatic organisms.

PHYSICAL PROPERTIES

Odor Threshold:	1.6 ppm
Flash Point:	Nonflammable
Vapor Density:	2.4 (air = 1)
Vapor Pressure:	760 mm Hg at -149°F (-100.6°C)
Specific Gravity:	2.9 (water = 1)
Water Solubility:	Soluble/Reacts
Boiling Point:	-148°F (-100°C)
Freezing Point:	-197°F (-127°C)
Critical Temp:	10°F (-12.2°C)
Ionization Potential:	15.5
Molecular Weight:	67.8

EXPOSURE LIMITS

OSHA: 1 ppm, Ceiling

NIOSH: 1 ppm, Ceiling

ACGIH: 1 ppm, Ceiling

IDLH: 25 ppm

The Protective Action Criteria values are:

PAC-1 = 1 ppm PAC-2 = 1 ppm PAC-3 = 1 ppm

PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Gloves:	Insulated Viton/Butyl (>8-hr breakthrough)
Coveralls:	Tychem® BR, CSM and TK (>8-hr breakthrough)
Respirator:	>1 ppm - SCBA

HEALTH EFFECTS

Eyes: Irritation and burns

Skin: Irritation and burns, contact with liquid causes frostbite (skin absorbable)

Inhalation: Nose, throat and lung irritation, with coughing, and severe shortness of breath (pulmonary edema)

FIRST AID AND DECONTAMINATION

Remove the person from exposure.

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

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

In case of contact with *liquid Boron Trifluoride*, immerse affected part in warm water. Seek medical attention.

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

Transfer promptly to a medical facility.

Medical observation is recommended as symptoms may be delayed.