



Right to Know Hazardous Substance Fact Sheet

Common Name: **CALCIUM CARBIDE**

Synonyms: Acetylenogen; Calcium Acetylde

Chemical Name: Calcium Carbide (Ca(C₂))

Date: August 2009 Revision: June 2016

CAS Number: 75-20-7

RTK Substance Number: 0312

DOT Number: UN 1402

Description and Use

Calcium Carbide is a grayish-black lump or crystalline (sand-like) powder with a garlic-like odor. It is used to generate *Acetylene gas*, as a reducing agent, and in steel manufacturing and metal cutting.

Reasons for Citation

- ▶ **Calcium Carbide** is on the Right to Know Hazardous Substance List because it is cited by DOT, NFPA and EPA.
- ▶ This chemical is on the Special Health Hazard Substance List.

SEE GLOSSARY ON PAGE 5.

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 flushing. Seek medical attention.

Skin Contact

- ▶ Quickly remove contaminated clothing. Immediately wash contaminated skin with large amounts of soap and water.

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	NJDHSS	NFPA
HEALTH	-	3
FLAMMABILITY	-	3
REACTIVITY	-	2W

FLAMMABLE AND WATER REACTIVE
POISONOUS GASES ARE PRODUCED IN FIRE
CONTAINERS MAY EXPLODE IN FIRE

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

- ▶ **Calcium Carbide** can affect you when inhaled.
- ▶ **Calcium Carbide** can irritate the skin causing a rash, redness and burning feeling on contact.
- ▶ Contact can severely irritate and burn the eyes with possible permanent damage (corneal opacities).
- ▶ Exposure can irritate the mouth, nose and throat.
- ▶ Inhaling **Calcium Carbide** can irritate the lungs. Higher exposures may cause a build-up of fluid in the lungs (pulmonary edema), a medical emergency.
- ▶ **Calcium Carbide** is FLAMMABLE and REACTIVE and a DANGEROUS FIRE and EXPLOSION HAZARD.
- ▶ When **Calcium Carbide** is exposed to WATER or MOISTURE it forms flammable *Acetylene gas*. Consult the Right to Know Hazardous Substance Fact Sheet on ACETYLENE.

Workplace Exposure Limits

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

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 Program website (<http://nj.gov/health/workplacehealthandsafety/right-to-know/>) 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 and the PEOSH Hazard Communication Standard (N.J.A.C. 12:100-7) 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) requires private 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 **Calcium Carbide**:

- ▶ **Calcium Carbide** can irritate the skin causing a rash, redness and burning feeling on contact
- ▶ Contact can severely irritate and burn the eyes with possible permanent damage (corneal opacities).
- ▶ Exposure can irritate the mouth, nose and throat.
- ▶ Inhaling **Calcium Carbide** 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 **Calcium Carbide** and can last for months or years:

Cancer Hazard

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

Other Effects

- ▶ **Calcium Carbide** 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:

- ▶ Chest x-ray and 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.

In addition, the following may be useful or required:

- ▶ Before entering a confined space where **Calcium Carbide** may be present, check to make sure that an explosive concentration does not exist.

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 **Calcium Carbide**. 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 Nitrile and Natural Rubber for gloves, and 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.

Eye Protection

- ▶ Wear eye protection with side shields or goggles.
- ▶ If additional protection is needed for the entire face, use in combination with a face shield. A face shield should not be used without another type of eye protection.

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 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 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).

- ▶ **Calcium Carbide** is a FLAMMABLE AND REACTIVE SOLID.
- ▶ When **Calcium Carbide** is exposed to WATER or MOISTURE it forms flammable *Acetylene gas*.
- ▶ Use approved Class D extinguishers or smother with dry sand, dry clay or dry ground limestone.
- ▶ DO NOT USE WATER, CO₂ or FOAM as extinguishing agents.
- ▶ POISONOUS GASES ARE PRODUCED IN FIRE, including *Calcium Oxides*.
- ▶ CONTAINERS MAY EXPLODE IN FIRE.
- ▶ Use water spray only 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 **Calcium Carbide** is spilled, take the following steps:

- ▶ Evacuate personnel and secure and control entrance to the area.
- ▶ Eliminate all ignition sources.
- ▶ Cover with dry lime, sand or soda ash and place into sealed containers for disposal.
- ▶ DO NOT USE WATER OR WET METHOD.
- ▶ Ventilate and wash area after clean-up is complete.
- ▶ Keep **Calcium Carbide** out of confined spaces, such as sewers, because of the possibility of an explosion.
- ▶ DO NOT wash into sewer.
- ▶ It may be necessary to contain and dispose of **Calcium Carbide** 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 **Calcium Carbide** you should be trained on its proper handling and storage.

- ▶ **Calcium Carbide** reacts with WATER and MOISTURE to produce flammable *Acetylene gas* and *Lime*. The heat of the reaction may ignite the *Acetylene*.
- ▶ **Calcium Carbide** reacts with COPPER, SILVER, MERCURY and BRASS to form explosive compounds such as METAL ACETYLIDES.
- ▶ **Calcium Carbide** is not compatible with METHANOL; OXIDIZING AGENTS (such as PERCHLORATES, PEROXIDES, PERMANGANATES, CHLORATES, NITRATES, CHLORINE, BROMINE and FLUORINE); STRONG ACIDS (such as HYDROCHLORIC, SULFURIC and NITRIC); ACID FUMES; STRONG BASES (such as SODIUM HYDROXIDE and POTASSIUM HYDROXIDE); and METAL SALTS and METAL OXIDES (such as IRON CHLORIDE and IRON OXIDE).
- ▶ Store in tightly closed containers in a cool, well-ventilated area away from COMBUSTIBLES and all sources of MOISTURE.
- ▶ Sources of ignition, such as smoking and open flames, are prohibited where **Calcium Carbide** is used, handled, or stored.
- ▶ Metal containers involving the transfer of **Calcium Carbide** should be grounded and bonded.
- ▶ Use only non-sparking tools and equipment, especially when opening and closing containers of **Calcium Carbide**.

Occupational Health Information Resources

The New Jersey Department of Health, Occupational Health Service, 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 Program
 PO Box 368
 Trenton, NJ 08625-0368
 Phone: 609-984-2202
 Fax: 609-984-7407
 E-mail: rtk@doh.nj.gov
 Web address:
<http://nj.gov/health/workplacehealthandsafety/right-to-know>

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.

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 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.

Common Name: **CALCIUM CARBIDE**

Synonyms: Acetylenogen; Calcium Acetylide

CAS No: 75-20-7

Molecular Formula: CaC₂

RTK Substance No: 0312

Description: Grayish-black lump or crystalline powder with a garlic-like odor

HAZARD DATA

Hazard Rating	Firefighting	Reactivity
<p>3 - Health</p> <p>3 - Fire</p> <p>2-W - Reactivity</p> <p>DOT#: UN 1402</p> <p>ERG Guide #: 138</p> <p>Hazard Class: 4.3 (Water Reactive/ Dangerous When Wet)</p>	<p>FLAMMABLE AND WATER REACTIVE When Calcium Carbide is exposed to WATER or MOISTURE it forms flammable <i>Acetylene gas</i>.</p> <p>Use approved Class D extinguishers or smother with dry sand, dry clay or dry ground limestone.</p> <p>DO NOT USE WATER, CO₂ or FOAM as extinguishing agents.</p> <p>POISONOUS GASES ARE PRODUCED IN FIRE, including <i>Calcium Oxides</i>.</p> <p>CONTAINERS MAY EXPLODE IN FIRE.</p> <p>Use water spray only to keep fire-exposed containers cool.</p>	<p>Calcium Carbide reacts with WATER and MOISTURE to produce flammable <i>Acetylene gas</i> and <i>Lime</i>. The heat of the reaction may ignite the <i>Acetylene</i>.</p> <p>Calcium Carbide reacts with COPPER, SILVER, MERCURY and BRASS to form explosive compounds such as METAL ACETYLIDES.</p> <p>Calcium Carbide is not compatible with METHANOL; OXIDIZING AGENTS (such as PERCHLORATES, PEROXIDES, PERMANGANATES, CHLORATES, NITRATES, CHLORINE, BROMINE and FLUORINE); STRONG ACIDS (such as HYDROCHLORIC, SULFURIC and NITRIC); ACID FUMES; STRONG BASES (such as SODIUM HYDROXIDE and POTASSIUM HYDROXIDE); and METAL SALTS and METAL OXIDES (such as IRON CHLORIDE and IRON OXIDE).</p>

SPILL/LEAKS

Isolation Distance:

Spill: 25 meters (75 feet)

Fire: 800 meters (1/2 mile)

Cover with dry lime, sand or soda ash and place into sealed containers for disposal.

Use only non-sparking tools and equipment, especially when opening and closing containers of **Calcium Carbide**.

DO NOT USE WATER OR WET METHOD.

Keep **Calcium Carbide** out of confined spaces, such as sewers, because of the possibility of an explosion.

DO NOT wash into sewer.

Calcium Carbide is harmful to aquatic life at low concentrations.

PHYSICAL PROPERTIES

Odor Threshold:	Garlic-like odor
Flash Point:	Flammable solid
LEL:	2.5% (for <i>Acetylene gas</i>)
UEL:	82% (for <i>Acetylene gas</i>)
Auto Ignition Temp:	617°F (325°C)
Specific Gravity:	2.22 (water = 1)
Water Solubility:	Reacts
Melting Point:	4,172°F (2,300°C)
Molecular Weight:	64.1

EXPOSURE LIMITS

No occupational exposure limits have been established for **Calcium Carbide**.

The Protective Action Criteria values are: PAC-1 = 120 mg/m³
PAC-2 = 1,300 mg/m³ PAC-3 = 7,900 mg/m³

PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Gloves:	Nitrile and Natural Rubber
Coveralls:	DuPont Tyvek®
Respirator:	>30 mg/m ³ - SCBA Use SCBA at any level if <i>Acetylene gas</i> may be present

HEALTH EFFECTS

Eyes:	Irritation and burns
Skin:	Irritation, rash and burning feeling
Inhalation:	Mouth, 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 15 minutes. Remove contact lenses if worn. Seek medical attention.

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

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.