



Right to Know Hazardous Substance Fact Sheet

Common Name: **SODIUM**

Synonyms: Natrium

Chemical Name: Sodium

Date: April 2001

Revision: April 2010

CAS Number: 7440-23-5

RTK Substance Number: 1674

DOT Number: UN 1428

Description and Use

Sodium is an odorless, soft, silvery-white metal. It is used as a laboratory reagent, to make other chemicals and *Sodium compounds*, in non-glare lighting on highways, and as a heat transfer agent.

Reasons for Citation

- ▶ **Sodium** 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

- ▶ Quickly brush off excess chemical from the face. 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 immediately.

Skin Contact

- ▶ Quickly remove contaminated clothing. Immediately blot or brush off excess chemical and wash gently with large amounts of water for at least 30 minutes. Seek medical attention immediately.

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	-	3
FLAMMABILITY	-	3
REACTIVITY	-	2
FLAMMABLE WATER AND AIR REACTIVE POISONOUS GASES ARE PRODUCED IN FIRE		

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

- ▶ **Sodium** can affect you when inhaled.
- ▶ Contact can severely irritate and burn the skin and eyes with possible eye damage.
- ▶ Exposure can irritate the nose and throat.
- ▶ Inhaling **Sodium** can irritate the lungs. Higher exposures may cause a build-up of fluid in the lungs (pulmonary edema), a medical emergency.
- ▶ **Sodium** can cause headache, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and abdominal pain.
- ▶ When **Sodium** combines with moisture from the air or skin it becomes corrosive *Sodium Hydroxide*. For more information, consult the *Right to Know Hazardous Substance Fact Sheet on SODIUM HYDROXIDE*.
- ▶ **Sodium** is FLAMMABLE and REACTIVE and a DANGEROUS FIRE and EXPLOSION HAZARD when exposed to WATER, STEAM, AIR or MOIST AIR.

Workplace Exposure Limits

No occupational exposure limits have been established for **Sodium**. 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 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 **Sodium**:

- ▶ Contact can severely irritate and burn the skin and eyes with possible eye damage.
- ▶ Exposure can irritate the nose and throat.
- ▶ Inhaling **Sodium** 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.
- ▶ **Sodium** can cause headache, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and abdominal pain.
- ▶ When **Sodium** combines with moisture from the air or skin, it becomes corrosive *Sodium Hydroxide*.

Chronic Health Effects

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

Cancer Hazard

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

Other Effects

- ▶ **Sodium** 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 is recommended:

- ▶ Consider chest x-ray after acute overexposure

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 **Sodium** may be present, check to make sure that an explosive concentration does not exist.
- ▶ Always keep **Sodium** dry and store under a liquid such as *Kerosene*.

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 **Sodium**. 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 gloves, and flame-retardant protective clothing for **Sodium**.
- ▶ 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 exists for overexposure to **Sodium**, use a NIOSH approved full facepiece negative pressure, air-purifying, particulate filter respirator with an N, R or P95 filter. More protection is provided by a full facepiece respirator than by a half-mask respirator.
- ▶ Leave the area immediately if (1) while wearing a filter or cartridge respirator you can smell, taste, or otherwise detect **Sodium**, (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 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).

- ▶ **Sodium** is a FLAMMABLE SOLID which will ignite spontaneously in AIR or MOIST AIR and reacts violently with WATER or STEAM to produce flammable and explosive *Hydrogen gas*.
- ▶ Use dry chemicals appropriate for extinguishing metal fires such as graphite, soda ash or powdered sodium chloride.
- ▶ DO NOT USE WATER, CO₂ or halogenated extinguishing agents.
- ▶ POISONOUS GASES ARE PRODUCED IN FIRE, including *Sodium Oxides*.

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 **Sodium** is spilled or leaked, take the following steps:

- ▶ Evacuate personnel and secure and control entrance to the area.
- ▶ Eliminate all ignition sources.
- ▶ DO NOT sweep up dry material, keep dry, cover with dry sand, limestone or clay, and place quickly into a dry container of *Kerosene*, *Naphtha*, *Light Oil* or similar material.
- ▶ DO NOT USE WATER OR WET METHOD.
- ▶ Ventilate and wash area after clean-up is complete.
- ▶ DO NOT wash into sewer.
- ▶ Keep **Sodium** out of confined spaces, such as sewers, because of the possibility of an explosion.
- ▶ It may be necessary to contain and dispose of **Sodium** 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 **Sodium** you should be trained on its proper handling and storage.

- ▶ **Sodium** reacts violently with WATER, STEAM, AIR and MOIST AIR to produce corrosive *Sodium Hydroxide* and flammable and explosive *Hydrogen gas*.
- ▶ **Sodium** can react explosively or violently with a broad range of chemicals including METALS (such as ALUMINUM, ARSENIC and ZINC); METAL COMPOUNDS; STRONG ACIDS (such as HYDROCHLORIC, SULFURIC and NITRIC); OXIDIZING AGENTS (such as PERCHLORATES, PEROXIDES, PERMANGANATES, CHLORATES, NITRATES, CHLORINE, BROMINE and FLUORINE); CHLORINATED HYDROCARBONS (such as METHYLENE CHLORIDE and TRICHLOROETHYLENE); CARBON DIOXIDE; AZIDES; and MALEIC ANHYDRIDE.
- ▶ Store under *Kerosene*, *Naphtha* or other *Light Oil* and in tightly closed containers in a cool, well-ventilated area away from ORGANICS and all forms of MOISTURE.
- ▶ Sources of ignition, such as smoking and open flames, are prohibited where **Sodium** is used, handled, or stored.
- ▶ Use only non-sparking tools and equipment, especially when opening and closing containers of **Sodium**.

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>

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 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: **SODIUM**

Synonyms: Natrium

CAS No: 7440-23-5

Molecular Formula: Na

RTK Substance No: 1674

Description: Odorless, soft, silvery-white metal

HAZARD DATA

Hazard Rating	Firefighting	Reactivity
3 - Health 3 - Fire 2 - Reactivity DOT#: UN 1428 ERG Guide #: 138 Hazard Class: 4.3 (Dangerous when wet)	<p>Sodium is a FLAMMABLE SOLID which will ignite spontaneously in AIR or MOIST AIR and reacts violently with WATER or STEAM to produce flammable and explosive <i>Hydrogen gas</i>.</p> <p>Use dry chemicals appropriate for extinguishing metal fires such as graphite, soda ash or powdered sodium chloride. DO NOT USE WATER, CO₂ or halogenated extinguishing agents.</p> <p>POISONOUS GASES ARE PRODUCED IN FIRE, including (<i>Sodium Oxides</i>).</p>	<p>Sodium reacts violently with WATER, STEAM, AIR and MOIST AIR to produce corrosive <i>Sodium Hydroxide</i> and flammable and explosive <i>Hydrogen gas</i>.</p> <p>Sodium can react explosively or violently with a broad range of chemicals including METALS (such as ALUMINUM, ARSENIC and ZINC); METAL COMPOUNDS; STRONG ACIDS (such as HYDROCHLORIC, SULFURIC and NITRIC); OXIDIZING AGENTS (such as PERCHLORATES, PEROXIDES, PERMANGANATES, CHLORATES, NITRATES, CHLORINE, BROMINE and FLUORINE); CHLORINATED HYDROCARBONS (such as METHYLENE CHLORIDE and TRICHLOROETHYLENE); CARBON DIOXIDE; AZIDES; and MALEIC ANHYDRIDE.</p>

SPILL/LEAKS

Isolation Distance:

Spill: 25 meters (75 feet)

Fire: 800 meters (1/2 mile)

DO NOT sweep up dry material, keep dry, cover with dry sand, limestone or clay, and place quickly into a container of *Kerosene, Naphtha, Light Oil* or similar material.

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

DO NOT wash into sewer.

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

Sodium is dangerous to aquatic life at high concentrations.

PHYSICAL PROPERTIES

Odor Threshold:	Odorless
Flash Point:	Flammable solid
Auto Ignition Temp:	>239°F (115°C)
Vapor Density:	0.003 (air = 1)
Vapor Pressure:	1.2 mm Hg at 752°F (400°C)
Specific Gravity:	0.97 (water = 1)
Water Solubility:	Decomposes (violently)
Boiling Point:	1,619°F (882°C)
Melting Point:	208°F (98°C)
Molecular Weight:	22.49

EXPOSURE LIMITS

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

The Protective Action Criteria values are:

PAC-1 = 0.5 mg/m³ PAC-2 = 5 mg/m³

PAC-3 = 50 mg/m³

PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Gloves:	Nitrile (>8-hr breakthrough for <i>Kerosene</i> and <i>Naphtha</i>)
Coveralls:	Turn out gear or flash protection
Respirator:	>0.5 mg/m ³ -full facepiece APR with High efficiency filters >5 mg/m ³ - SCBA

HEALTH EFFECTS

Eyes: Irritation and burns

Skin: Irritation and burns

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

Headache, dizziness, nausea and vomiting

FIRST AID AND DECONTAMINATION

Remove the person from exposure.

Quickly brush off excess chemical from the face. Flush with large amounts of water for at least 30 minutes. Remove contact lenses, if worn. Seek medical attention immediately.

Quickly remove contaminated clothing. Immediately blot or brush off excess chemical and wash with large amounts of water for at least 30 minutes. Seek medical attention immediately.

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.