Preventing Asthma and Death from Diisocyanate Exposure

WARNING!
Workers exposed to diisocyanates may develop serious or fatal respiratory disease.

Employers should take the following steps to protect workers from diisocyanate exposure:

- Make workers aware of the serious health effects that may result from diisocyanate exposures.
- Make workers aware of any materials that may contain or be contaminated with diisocyanates.
- When feasible, substitute a less hazardous material for diisocyanates.
- If substitution is not possible, use engineering controls such as closed systems and ventilation to minimize exposures.
- Provide appropriate respiratory protection to workers exposed to diisocyanates.

Workers should take the following steps to protect themselves from diisocyanate exposure:

- Be aware that the highest diisocyanate concentrations may occur inside containment structures.
- Use appropriate respiratory protection when working with diisocyanates.
- Wash hands and face before eating, drinking, or smoking outside the work area.
- Shower and change into clean clothes before leaving the worksite.
- Participate in medical monitoring and examination programs, air monitoring programs, or training programs offered by your employer.

For additional information, see NIOSH ALERT: Request for Assistance in Preventing Asthma and Death from Diisocyanate Exposure [DHHS (NIOSH) Publication No. 96–111]. Single copies of the Alert are available free from the following:

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