

Hazardous Material Disposal Stats and Facts



FACTS

1. Recycling hazardous waste has a variety of benefits including reducing the consumption of raw materials and the volume of waste materials that must be treated and disposed. However, improper storage of those materials might cause spills, leaks, fires, and contamination of soil and drinking water.
2. Toxic wastes are poisons, even in very small or trace amounts. They may have acute effects, causing death or violent illness, or they may have chronic effects, slowly causing irreparable harm.
3. Reactive wastes are chemically unstable and react violently with air or water.
4. Ignitable wastes burn at relatively low temperatures and may cause an immediate fire hazard. Corrosive wastes include strong acidic or alkaline substances.
5. Infectious wastes include used bandages, hypodermic needles, and other materials from hospitals or biological research facilities.
6. Radioactive wastes emit ionizing energy that can harm living organisms. Some radioactive materials can persist in the environment for many thousands of years before fully decaying.
7. The management of radioactive waste—particularly nuclear fission waste—is usually considered an engineering task separate from other forms of hazardous-waste management.

STATS

- In 2017, 41 U.S. workers died on the job after a single episode of inhaling chemicals and chemical products—7 more fatal injuries than in 2016. This number ranged between 33 and 55 fatal injuries each year from 2011 to 2017, with a total of 297 fatalities across the 7-year span.
- Of the fatal single episode inhalations of chemicals and chemical products in 2017, 37 percent occurred in a confined space (110 fatal injuries). All fatal single inhalations of methane gas involved a confined space.
- Deaths by exposure to hazardous chemicals increased 29% in 2019
- Two million people died due to exposure to hazardous chemicals in 2019.
- Over 0.9 million people died from exposure to lead. Of these, close to 9 out of every 10 persons died from CVD due to lead exposure. In fact, the deaths due to lead exposure have also increased by a disturbing 67 % in 2019
- According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, exposure to harmful substances or environments is among the five most common causes of workplace fatalities. Nearly 10 % of all workers who lose their lives due to occupational illnesses or injuries die as a result of chemical exposure. This amounts to an estimated

60,000 deaths – which is on top of the roughly 860,000 illnesses resulting from chemical exposure in the workplace every year.