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| University of Pittsburgh Safety Manual | EH&S Guideline Number: 04-029 | |
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CYANIDE STORAGE

Cyanides are a class of chemicals widely known for their toxic properties, whether solid, liquid, or in solution. Cyanides can enter the body through several means including ingestion, absorption, and inhalation. In addition, nearly all cyanides will release hydrogen cyanide, a toxic gas, when exposed to or mixed with acids. Even weak acids will release hydrogen cyanide. Cyanide poisoning may be lethal in small amounts; obtaining immediate medical assistance is essential if exposure is suspected.

Due to the name recognition associated with cyanides, specific guidelines are described below for the storage of cyanides.

1. SCOPE

These guidelines apply to cyanide salts.

2. GUIDELINES

- 2.1 Cyanides, like all other laboratory chemicals, should be procured in the smallest quantity necessary for the intended research, teaching, or other approved use.
- 2.2 Cyanides must be secured in a locked cabinet or drawer (i.e. stored under lock and key or equivalent) when not in immediate use.
- 2.3 Cyanides must be accessible only to those individuals that are authorized to be in the specific laboratory and have documented training on the safe storage and handling of cyanide in the specific laboratory.
- 2.4 The storage area for cyanides should be protected from overhead water sources, such as fire sprinkler systems.
- 2.5 Cyanides should not be stored with acids, acid anhydrides, dry acid salts, oxidizers, sulfur dioxide, chlorine or carbon dioxide.