

Frequently Asked Questions or Questions and Answers

From:

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1) What are the dangers, if any, of using acetone in the shop?

Flammable:

Acetone is an extremely flammable liquid and vapours may cause a flash fire.

Inhalation:

Inhalation of vapours irritates the respiratory tract. May cause coughing, dizziness, dullness, and headache. Higher concentrations can produce central nervous system depression, narcosis, and unconsciousness.

Ingestion:

Swallowing small amounts is not likely to produce harmful effects. Ingestion of larger amounts may produce abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting.

Aspiration:

Aspiration into lungs can produce severe lung damage and is a medical emergency. Other symptoms are expected to parallel inhalation.

Skin Contact:

Irritating to skin due to defatting action. Causes redness, pain, drying and cracking of the skin.

Eye Contact:

Vapours are irritating to the eyes. Splashes may cause severe irritation, with stinging, tearing, redness and pain. It can cause **permanent** damage to the eye, with clouding of the cornea.

Chronic Exposure:

Prolonged or repeated skin contact may produce severe irritation or dermatitis.

Aggravation of Pre-existing Conditions:

Use of alcoholic beverages enhances toxic effects. Exposure may increase the toxic potential of chlorinated hydrocarbons, such as chloroform, trichloroethane.

2) What should be done to minimize or avert injury from acetone?

Protective Equipment:

- Goggles and/or shield, apron, latex gloves, good ventilation (should not be used in a room without good ventilation ex: basement).
- Keep away from heat, sparks and flame.
- Keep container close.
- Don't drink alcoholic beverages in presence of acetone.

3) Is there some kind of First Aid item that I could use in case a spillage occurs?

First Aid Measures

Inhalation:

- Remove to fresh air.
- If not breathing, give artificial respiration. If breathing is difficult, give oxygen.
- Get medical attention.

Ingestion:

Aspiration hazard.

- If swallowed, vomiting may occur spontaneously, but **DO NOT INDUCE**.
- If vomiting occurs, keep head below hips to prevent aspiration into lungs. Never give anything by mouth to an unconscious person. Call a physician immediately .

Skin Contact:

- Immediately flush skin with plenty of water for at least 15 minutes.
- Remove contaminated clothing and shoes.
- Get medical attention.
- Wash clothing before reuse.

Eye Contact:

- Immediately flush eyes with plenty of water for at least 15 minutes, lifting upper and lower eyelids occasionally.
- *Get medical attention.*

N.B. In one particular case, there was permanent damage to the eye, with clouding of the cornea.

Spills:

- Ventilate area of leak or spill.

- Remove all sources of ignition.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (specified above).
- Keep unnecessary and unprotected people from entering.
- Contain and recover liquid when possible.
- Use non-sparking tools and equipment.
- Do not use combustible materials, such as **saw dust**.
- Collect liquid or absorb with an inert material (e.g., vermiculite, dry sand, earth), and place in a metal container with a cover.
- Do **not** flush to sewer!
- Dispose of as you would other hazardous household waste.

References

Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) available at:

<http://www.jtbaker.com/msds/englishhtml/A0446.htm>

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety

http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/chemicals/chem_profiles/acetone/health_ace.html#_13