ROCKWOOD

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Dear valued partner,

Chemical storage is one of the most critical – and often overlooked – components of workplace safety. Many chemical incidents do not occur during active use but instead result from improper storage. Leaking containers, incompatible chemicals stored together, blocked ventilation, or missing labels can quickly turn routine materials into serious hazards.

Proper chemical storage protects employees from exposure, prevents fires and explosions, preserves product integrity, and ensures compliance with safety regulations. This newsletter focuses on how correct storage practices directly reduce chemical hazards, keeping people, facilities, and the environment safe.

Which action BEST reduces chemical hazards in storage areas?

A. Storing chemicals alphabetically for easier inventory
B. Keeping chemicals in their original, labeled containers and separating them by compatibility
C. Transferring chemicals into smaller, unlabeled containers
D. Storing extra chemicals in any available space

Answer at the end of the email.

(Missed a previous email? Click here to see an archive of previous months' safety emails on Rockwood's Loss Control website).

WHY IS CHEMICAL STORAGE SO IMPORTANT?

When chemicals are not stored correctly, they can degrade, react, or escape their containers. Even stable chemicals can become dangerous when exposed to heat, moisture, or incompatible substances.

WHAT ARE SOME COMMON HAZARDS CAUSED BY POOR STORAGE?

Most of these hazards are preventable through proper storage planning and routine inspections.

	Fires or explosions from flammable vapors
	Toxic gas releases from chemical reactions
	Skin burns and eye injuries from leaking containers
	Structural damage from corrosive chemicals
	Environmental contamination from spills or leaks

WHAT ARE SOME KEY PRINCIPLES OF SAFE CHEMICAL STORAGE?

1. Chemicals by Compatibility – Not Convenience	One of the most important storage rules is never store chemicals alphabetically or by convenience. Chemicals must be grouped based on how they react with other substances. **Examples of incompatible storage:** • Acids stored with bases

	• Oxidizers stored with flammable liquids • Water-reactive chemicals stored near sinks or sprinkler systems. Storing incompatible chemicals together increases the risk of fires, explosions, and toxic releases if containers leak or break. Storing incompatible chemicals together increases the risk of fires, explosions, and toxic releases if containers leak or break.
2. Use Proper Storage Cabinets and Areas	Different chemicals require different types of storage to control their hazards. • **Flammable liquids** must be stored in approved flammable storage cabinets. • **Corrosive chemicals** should be stored in corrosion-resistant cabinets with secondary containment. • **Toxic chemicals** must be stored in secure, labeled areas with restricted access. • **Compressed gas cylinders** must be stored upright, secured with chains or straps, and protected from impact.
3. Maintain Clear and Accurate Labeling	Every chemical container – large or small – must be clearly labeled. **Labels should include:** • Chemical name (no abbreviations) • Hazard warnings or pictograms

	• Manufacturer information Unlabeled or poorly labeled containers are a major safety risk and should be reported immediately. Never assume the contents of a container based on appearance or location.
4. Control Storage Conditions	Environmental conditions play a major role in chemical stability. • Store chemicals in cool, dry, and well-ventilated areas. • Keep chemicals away from direct sunlight and heat sources. • Follow manufacturers' recommendations for temperature and humidity. • Ensure ventilation systems are working properly in storage areas. Improper conditions can cause containers to swell, leak, or rupture, increasing exposure risks.
5. Inspect Storage Areas Regularly	Routine inspections help catch problems before they become incidents. **What to look for during inspections:** • Leaking, bulging, or corroded containers • Cracked lids or loose caps • Expired or degraded chemicals • Improper storage of incompatible materials • Cluttered or overcrowded shelves

	Damaged or outdated chemicals should be removed and disposed of according to approved procedures.
6. Employee Responsibilities in Chemical Storage	Every employee plays a role in safe chemical storage. **Employees should:** • Store chemicals only in approved areas • Return chemicals to proper storage after use • Report damaged containers or unsafe conditions • Never relocate chemicals without authorization • Follow training and posted storage guidelines Small actions – such as returning a container to the wrong shelf – can create serious hazards.

SAFETY TIPS FOR CHEMICAL STORAGE

Follow these tips to help avoid incident or injury:

 **Utilize Safety Data Sheets (SDS)**	Safety Data Sheets (SDS) provide essential storage information, including: • Required storage temperature • Incompatible materials • Ventilation needs • Shelf-life considerations Before storing any chemical, review its SDS and ensure the storage location meets all requirements. SDS documents

	should always be accessible to employees.
 **Utilize Secondary Containment and Spill Prevention**	Secondary containment is an added layer of protection that helps control spills and leaks. • Use trays, bins, or shelving with built-in containment. • Ensure containment systems can hold the contents of the largest container. • Never bypass or remove containment devices. • Keep spill kits readily available Secondary containment prevents spills from spreading and reduces the risk of exposure and environmental damage.
 **Training**	Train employees on proper chemical storage, Hazard Communication, Safety Data Sheets, and other chemical related topics to ensure safe handling, storage, cleanup, and first aid/emergency response procedures.

OSHA, MSHA and other resources:

- Chemical Segregation and Storage Table | National Institute of Health (NIH)
- Chemical Storage Guidelines: Flammable Materials | Oregon OSHA – includes Chart for Maximum Allowable Size of Containers and Portable Tanks for Flammable Liquids
- 1910.106 – Flammable liquids | OSHA – Link to OSHA Standard
- Pocket Guide to Chemical Hazards | NIOSH & CDC
- Hazardous Chemicals Health & Safety Alert | Mine Safety & Health Administration (MSHA)
- MNM Safety Alert - Materials Storage and Warehouse Safety | Mine Safety & Health Administration (MSHA)

Learn more about chemical storage on Streamery

Every Rockwood policy includes access to Streamery, a vast safety library with videos, quizzes and more resources to help you promote safety in your workplace. If you don't have access, contact us to get a username. Enter the SKU number below to find the recommended video.

Watch these videos on Streamery:

- **Grocery: Hazard Communication GHS:** 8 min / SKU: 8040 + 8040-S / English & Spanish
- **HAZWOPER – Chemical Protective Clothing:** 10 min / SKU: 3388 / English
- **Orientation to Laboratory Safety:** 12 min / SKU: 2712 / English
- **Spill Cleanup: The Basics:** 4 min / SKU: 8064 / English

Bonus materials:

1: OSHA Recordkeeping

Post Form 300A by Feb 1. Each February through April, many employers with more than 10 employees must post a summary of the injuries and illnesses recorded the previous year (OSHA Form 300A). Records must be maintained at the worksite for at least 5 years. If you need more information on if you fall under this requirement or what kind of information is required of you, please visit this link: Recordkeeping - Overview | Occupational Safety and Health Administration or reach out to the Rockwood Loss Control team at the email listed below.

2: PA Certified Workplace Safety Committee

Certify your safety committee to receive a 5% discount on your workers' compensation premium! Contact Rockwood Casualty for assistance with setting up your state-certified committee

3: Seat Belt Covers

Don't forget that Rockwood Casualty is providing **FREE** high visibility seatbelt covers to our insureds to assist in

enforcement of seatbelt use by employees. Please contact safetysolutions@rockwoodcasualty.com to make a request for your company and specify orange or yellow.

Questions? Feel free to reach out

As always, your Rockwood partners are available to answer your questions and help you promote safety in the workplace. Contact Rockwood Loss Control for any support you need.

Thank you for your continued partnership,

Rockwood Loss Control Team
Safetysolutions@rockwoodcasualty.com

#RockwoodSafetySolutions #LossControl #SafetyTips

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