

A **hazardous material** is defined as any substance that may cause adverse physical or health effects of employees. It is imperative that hazardous materials be handled properly.

A **hazardous waste** is defined as a waste that is potentially harmful to employees or the environment. Hazardous wastes can be liquids, solids, gases or sludges.

Physical hazards from chemicals include:

- Combustible liquids
- Compressed gas
- Explosives
- Flammable materials
- Organic peroxides
- Oxidizers
- Pyrophoric
- Unstable (reactive)
- Water-reactive substances

Examples of physical hazards are alcohol and acetone. If handled safely, these materials should not be harmful.

A **health hazard** on the other hand, is a chemical that in exposed employees acute or chronic health effects may occur. This includes:

- Chemicals which are carcinogens
- Toxic or highly toxic agents
- Reproductive toxins
- Irritants
- Corrosives
- Sensitizers
- Hepatotoxins
- Nephrotoxins
- Neurotoxins
- Agents which act on the hematopoietic system (organs and tissues)
- Agents which damage the lungs, skin, eyes, or mucous membranes

Examples of health hazards are solvents, formaldehyde, and mercury.