

# Working Safely with Corrosives Stats and Facts



## FACTS

1. Corrosive chemicals are hazardous wastes.
2. Corrosive gases and vapors are extremely hazardous. Examples include:
  - Ammonia
  - Hydrogen chloride
  - Nitrogen dioxide
  - Sulfur dioxide
3. Corrosives typically consist of an acid or a base. Acids include hydrochloric acid, sulfuric acid, nitric acid, and chromic acid. Bases include ammonium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, and sodium hydroxide.

4. Corrosive exposure occurs when:

**Inhalation.** Breathing in even small amounts of corrosive material can cause nose, throat, and mouth irritation. Larger amounts can potentially cause severe lung damage.

**Ingestion.** Initial symptoms include drooling and dysphagia. Pain, vomiting, and sometimes bleeding will develop immediately in the mouth, throat, chest, or abdomen.

**Eye Contact.** Symptoms can include eye redness, irritation, pain, swelling, blurred vision, or inability to keep eyes open.

**Skin Contact.** Symptoms can include pain, redness, burns, and blistering.

## STATS

- 25,263 autopsy cases were reviewed in which the cause of death was determined to be corrosive injury in 23 cases.
- Of the cases, one was a child, and the corrosive substance ingestion was accidental.
- All other cases were adults, and the ingestion was for suicidal intent.
- 16 (69,90) of the corrosive cases were female.
- Nitric acid was the most frequent agent with 13 cases (56.5%).
- Necrosis of esophagus was determined in 19 cases (82.6%) and perforation of

stomach in 11 cases (47.8%)