

This is an official CDC Health Advisory

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Potential Health Effects Associated with Hydrazine and Satellite Reentry

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is collaborating with federal partners to address potential health and safety threats associated with the reentry of an uncontrolled U.S. government satellite into the earth's atmosphere within the next few weeks. Because the satellite's fuel contains the toxic chemical hydrazine, it is possible that the reentry of the satellite could pose a public health threat if pieces of it fall into populated areas. The risk of health effects related to the satellite is considered to be low. However, CDC is encouraging health officials and clinicians to review information about the health effects related to hydrazine to prepare in case their communities are affected by satellite debris.

Hydrazine is a clear, colorless liquid with an ammonia-like odor. Hydrazine is highly reactive and easily catches fire. It can easily evaporate to the air and can dissolve in water. In soil, hydrazine may stick to particles. In each of these forms hydrazine breaks down quickly into less harmful compounds.

People can be exposed to hydrazine by breathing contaminated air, dermal contact, or ingestion. Breathing hydrazine may cause coughing and irritation of the throat and lungs, convulsions, tremors, or seizures. Dermal contact may cause redness, pain, and burns. Eating or drinking small amounts of hydrazine may cause nausea, vomiting, uncontrolled shaking, inflammation of the nerves, drowsiness, or coma.

Additional information about hydrazine can be found at <http://emergency.cdc.gov/agent/hydrazine/>, including the following topics:

- Frequently asked questions about hydrazine (<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/tfacts100.html>)
- Toxicological & adverse health effect information about hydrazine (<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxprofiles/tp100.html>)
- NIOSH Pocket Safety guide to chemical hazards on hydrazine (<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npg/npgd0329.html>)
- Chemical Emergencies Overview (<http://emergency.cdc.gov/chemical/overview.asp>)
- Emergency preparedness (<http://emergency.cdc.gov/preparedness/>)

Because we do not know yet where the satellite or satellite debris will land or the scope of any health risks associated with the satellite's reentry, CDC will be updating its website and providing the public health work force, clinicians, and the general public with more information as it becomes available.

You may also call CDC toll free at 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636) for more information.

Categories of Health Alert messages:

Health Alert conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

This Message was distributed to State and Local Health Officers, Epidemiologists, State Laboratory Directors, PHEP Coordinators, HAN Coordinators and Public Information Officers as well as Public Health Associations and Clinician organizations