

TOOLBOX TALK #6

WORKING SAFELY WITH CLEANING PRODUCTS

Many workers use cleaning products every day as part of their job responsibilities. Common cleaning products may seem harmless, but they can lead to serious health problems if mishandled. According to the New Jersey Department of Human Services, cleaning products can cause asthma or aggravate a pre-existing asthma condition.

When working with cleaning products, the department recommends workers watch for wheezing, chest tightness, shortness of breath or coughing. If you experience any of these symptoms, contact your doctor.

To avoid becoming sick while using cleaning products:

- Always read and follow warning labels, as well as Safety data Sheets.
- Wear eye protection when using caustic cleaners.
- Wear gloves. Skin contact with cleaners can sometimes cause allergies.
- Never mix cleaners, as poisonous fumes may result.
- Be mindful of small rooms with poor ventilation. Leave windows and doors open or use a fan to better circulate air.
- Be aware that dust masks will not prevent you from breathing in fumes.
- Use less-toxic cleaners, if possible.

