

### Attention! Car wash, truck wash, auto detailers, and truck drivers

**Do you** remember the first season of Breaking Bad when Walter asked Jesse to pick up some hydrofluoric acid and a plastic tote at the hardware store? Walt knew that hydrofluoric acid (HF) eats through bodies.

Your wash products, rust removers & brighteners may contain HF because in addition to bodies, it eats away metal, rock, concrete, and road grime (but not plastic!). Even minor contact, like on your fingertips, needs immediate rinsing and medical attention. HF kills nerves and people often delay emergency action because they can't feel the burn.

#### Real people

- In 2012 a truck wash worker died from swallowing Fast Bright (NW Chemical LLC), a common truck wash product that contains HF at <12%<sup>(1)</sup>
- Another car wash worker sustained a finger amputation after using latex gloves contaminated with HF<sup>(2)</sup>

It can take up to 24 hours to feel severe pain when exposed to dilute HF, at which time you might already have permanent damage.

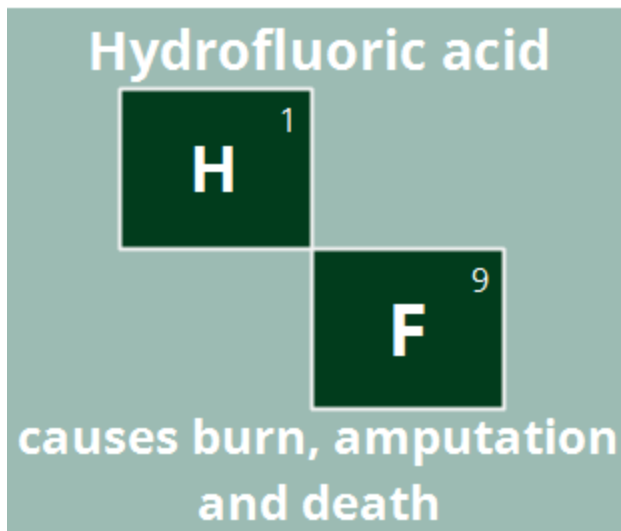
Skin contact, even with dilute HF solutions (<2%) will burn. Permanent pain, paralysis, or disability can result. Splashes to the eye may cause blindness.

### FIND A SAFER PRODUCT

Talk to your supplier.

Know that ammonium bifluoride (NH<sub>4</sub>HF<sub>2</sub>) is not a safe substitute.

Review product Safety Data Sheets to identify HF (CAS 7664-39-3).



#### What to do

- Restrict access to concentrate HF products
- Label ALL containers
- Have an eyewash station
- Educate and train workers
- Annually re-stock calcium gluconate gel for first aid
- Upon contact, remove soiled clothes, rinse skin for 15 min, apply gel, call 911.

#### Protect yourself

- Wear rubber boots, thick neoprene gloves and a face shield
  - Car wash mitts, latex, and leather gloves DO NOT protect workers from HF
- Routinely rinse protective equipment with water, turn inside out, let dry
- Replace torn gloves ASAP

#### Resources

Free assistance from WA State Department of Labor & Industries' SHARP Program, 1-888-66-SHARP or L&I's Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) Consultation 1-800-423-7233

<sup>1</sup> Occupational hydrofluoric acid injury from car and truck washing – Washington State, 2001-2013. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2015; 64:(32) ; 874-877 ([http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6432a4.htm?s\\_cid=mm6432a4\\_w](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6432a4.htm?s_cid=mm6432a4_w))

<sup>2</sup> Hydrofluoric Acid Hazard Alert. Oregon OSHA. May 2013. (<http://www.cbs.state.or.us/osh/pdf/hazards/2993-22.pdf>).