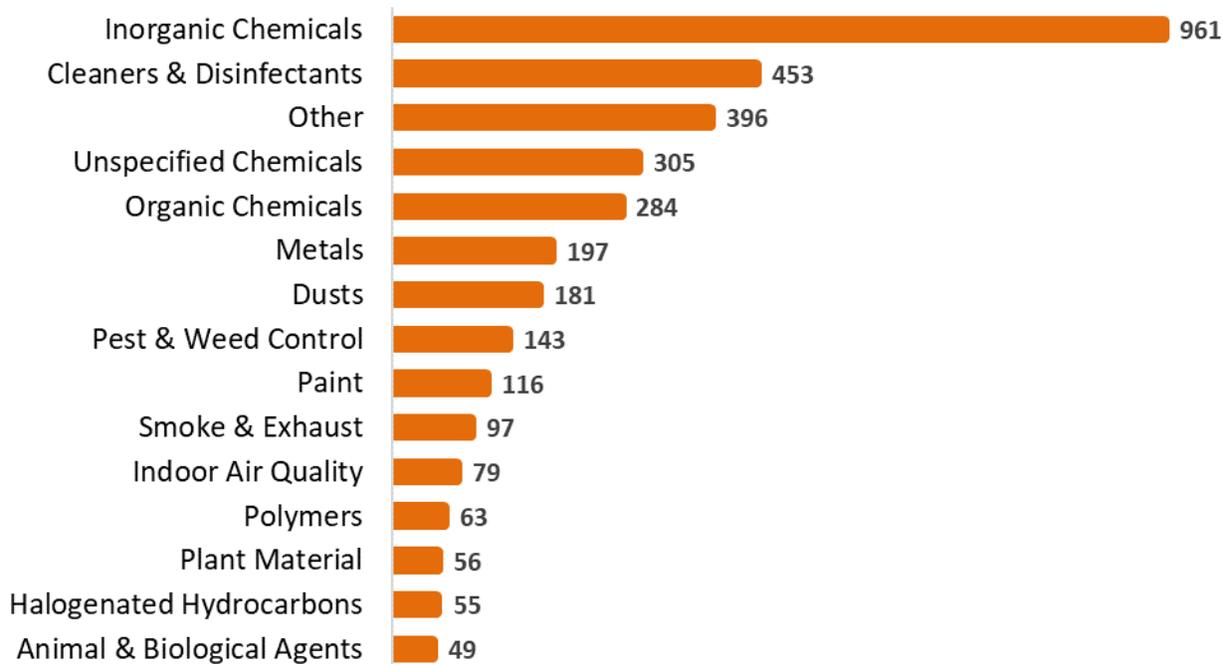


Causes of toxic inhalation in the workplace

Washington State Workers' Compensation Data, 2017–2020

Case counts per category of inhalation exposure to vapors, gas, dusts or fumes (N = 3435)¹



A total of 2604 workers reported 3435 inhalation exposures to 388 different substances.²

- The majority of workers were male (61%) and the median age was 43 (range 17 to 87).²
- Industries with the highest frequency of workers with a toxic inhalation included Manufacturing (14%), followed by Agriculture, Construction, Health Care, and Public Administration each with approximately 9% of the inhalation cases.²
- Potential health effects of a toxic inhalation varied by substance and dose and included upper and lower airway irritation, pulmonary effects, asphyxiation, nervous system disease, cancer, and more.²
- Six workers identified by the surveillance system with a toxic inhalation also died. Thirty-five workers were hospitalized.²

1. Workers could be exposed to substances in more than one *category* during their inhalation incident (e.g. paint and dust). Categories are exclusive of each other such that exposure to a cleaner with a formulation that includes an organic chemical is exclusively counted as 'cleaners & disinfectants'; not as 'cleaners & disinfectants' as well as 'organic chemical'.
2. [SHARP's Toxic Inhalation Surveillance Program](#), technical report # [64-30-2021](#) (29 pp.) and appendix tables report # [64-32-2021](#) (50 pp.) include toxic inhalation exposure information by industry, occupation and potential health effect.