

PLAYING IT SAFE

Be safe and healthy on the job at with these helpful tips provided by Bankers Insurance, LLC.

Using Ammonia Safely on the Farm

Take precautions when using this dangerous chemical

Ammonia is widely used as a soil fertilizer because of it is efficient to apply and readily available. However, it also can pose serious health risks to workers who are exposed to it at such concentrated levels. In fact, ammonia is one of the most hazardous chemicals used in agriculture. If you apply, handle or are exposed to ammonia fertilizer, it is important that you take necessary safety precautions to avoid serious health problems.

Ammonia Dangers

Ammonia is considered dangerous, as it is extremely corrosive to the eyes, skin and lungs. If inhaled, it will irritate the eyes, nose and throat, and can cause severe coughing or choking in higher concentrations. Those with asthma are typically especially sensitive to ammonia fumes. Even without inhalation, prolonged exposure to either the liquid or gaseous form can also result in eye damage and chemical burns on the skin.

Protect Yourself

- To reduce your risk of overexposure when using ammonia fertilizer, use only the amount and concentration required for the task at hand.
- Wear appropriate personal protective gear when working with ammonia, including long sleeves, thick rubber gloves and chemical-proof safety goggles. Do not wear contact lenses when working with this chemical. You may also consider wearing a full-face respirator to protect against inhalation.

- Store ammonia in a cool, dry area far away from chlorine, acid, oxidizers and metals. Be especially careful to avoid mixing chlorine and ammonia, as this can produce a toxic gas.
- Frequently inspect storage facilities and processing equipment to prevent exposure and accidental leaks.
- Always use the product according to the directions on the label. Also, be sure to read operating instructions before using ammonia application equipment.
- When applying ammonia fertilizer, you should always have at least five gallons of clean water accessible to you in case of emergency. You should also have a separate 8-ounce eyewash bottle.
- Watch for signs of skin contact with ammonia—redness, pain, burns and irritations. If your clothes are accidentally splashed, remove them immediately and wash your skin for 15 minutes.
- If ammonia splashes in your eyes, flush them with water for 15 minutes and seek medical treatment immediately.



Did You Know?

Soil contains hazardous fumes from ammonia fertilizers for a couple days after application. If you must work in an area where it was recently applied, use the proper ammonia protective gear to avoid overexposure through inhalation or skin contact.

This flyer is for informational purposes only and is not intended as medical or legal advice.

© 2010 Zywave, Inc. All rights reserved.