Formaldehyde a hazardous substance utilized primarily in Cornell University laboratories and within Cornell Veterinary College as a tissue preservative. Exposure to this chemical occurs primarily by inhaling formaldehyde gas/vapor or by absorbing liquids containing formaldehyde through the skin. Formaldehyde can cause watery eyes, burning sensations in the eyes and throat, nausea, and difficulty breathing when exposed to elevated levels (above 0.1 ppm).

**FORMALDEHYDE INFORMATION**
- Formaldehyde is CH₂O, the simplest aldehyde
- Formaldehyde is found in; preservatives in medical labs, chemicals, particle board, glues, permanent press fabrics, paper product coatings, fiberboard, and plywood, industrial fungicide, germicide, and disinfectant
- Formaldehyde can be a liquid (formalin) or a solid (paraformaldehyde). Often referred to as formalin

**ROUTES OF EXPOSURE**
- The primary routes of formaldehyde exposure is through inhalation as a gas or vapor, or the absorption through the skin
- Liquids containing 1% or more of formaldehyde is to be prevented from contacting skin and eyes through proper personal protective equipment (PPE). Safety Glasses, Gloves and Protective garment such as a lab coat, apron or gown, close toed shoes

**EXPOSURE MONITORING**
- Request can be made to EHS for all concerns and monitoring related to Formaldehyde exposures
  - ASKEHS@cornell.edu or 607-255-8200

**EMPLOYER REQUIREMENTS**
- Emergency eyewash stations and showers shall be available where formaldehyde is present
- Label all solutions containing greater than 0.1% formaldehyde, and materials capable of releasing formaldehyde into the air at or exceeding 0.1ppm
  - Request exposure monitoring if unsure or there is a change in process
- Materials capable of releasing formaldehyde at 0.5ppm or greater during normal use must have a label stating that it is a potential cancer hazard.
  - Request exposure monitoring if unsure or there is a change in process
- Cornell EHS will maintain an accurate record of the measurements taken to monitor employee exposures
- Exposure Limits:
  - Permissible exposure limit (PEL) is 0.75 parts per million parts of air (0.75 ppm)
  - Short-term exposure limit (STEL) of 2 ppm, this is the maximum exposure for a 15-minute period.

**TRAINING**
- Required for all workers exposed to formaldehyde concentrations of 0.1 ppm or greater at the time of initial job assignment and whenever a new exposure to formaldehyde is introduced into the work area must be trained. Repeat training annually.
- Formaldehyde awareness training (available on CU learn Course # 2341) and read the formaldehyde Safety Data Sheet (SDS).
- Additional Training: Hazard Communication (EHS 2343) or Laboratory Safety (EHS 2555)

To report large spills call 607-255-1111 or 911 from campus phone, small spills can be cleaned up by personnel per training and standard operating procedures