

## 2-Butoxyethanol in cleaning products

2-Butoxyethanol (2-BE) is used in cleaning products including surface cleaners, floor strippers, window cleaners, spot cleaners, rust removers and ink and resin removers.

NICNAS assessed 2-BE in October 1996. The assessment focussed specifically on its use in cleaning products but the findings are relevant to other uses. These are the main findings of that assessment.

A product containing more than 12.5% 2-BE is classed as a Hazardous Substance.

2-BE is not classified under the Australian Dangerous Goods Code. However, it meets the criteria for a Class 6.1 (b) Dangerous Good.

2-BE is a scheduled poison.

2-BE poisoning can occur through the skin, swallowing or by inhalation. Of these, breathing in 2-BE spray or vapour is the most likely way for poisoning to occur. 2-BE can be absorbed through the skin as a liquid or a vapour. Poisoning can occur through this route without signs of irritation.

Signs of 2-BE poisoning include headaches, irritation to the eyes and nose, nausea and tiredness.

Repeated exposure to high concentrations of 2-BE can cause blood disorders.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Avoid touching 2-BE and touching or breathing its spray or vapour.

It is possible to eliminate the use of 2-BE in most applications. However, where it is impossible to eliminate the use of 2-BE, replacing processes involving spray or heat, with a liquid form or a cold process is advised.

The use of clothing which covers the arms, legs and feet is recommended. Butyl or nitrile rubber gloves are the best for this substance. Eye protection should be worn when spray or vapour is likely to be generated.

Workers using 2-BE should be trained to use it safely.

The national exposure standard for 2-BE is 25 ppm TWA.

More information on 2-Butoxyethanol can be found in the Material Safety Data Sheet available from the supplier. The most comprehensive source of information is the detailed assessment of 2-Butoxyethanol in Cleaning Products published by the National Industrial Chemical Notification and Assessments Scheme (NICNAS). This is available free of charge by calling 1800 638 528. More information on the use of industrial chemicals can be found at the NICNAS website: [www.nicnas.gov.au](http://www.nicnas.gov.au)