Preparation for the Investigation

Know the Agent

- Cyanide is commonly found as a gas or solid in industry. In solid form cyanide is found as a white, granular or crystal solid. In gaseous form cyanide is colorless or pale-blue. Both forms of cyanide have almond-like odors.
  - Read about cyanide in the cyanide Fact Sheet.
- For additional information, visit:
- Contact:
  - Public Health Preparedness & Response Branch (PHP&R): 888.820.0520.
- Print and review form:
  - Chemically Exposed Persons Line Listing.

Conducting the Investigation

Evaluate Release/Exposure

- Define scale/scope of exposure (work with N.C. Emergency Management, HazMat, an Environmental Health Specialist at the local or state level, N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources [N.C. DENR], and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [U.S. EPA] if applicable).
### Identify Route of Human Chemical Exposure

- Identify route of exposure:
  - Inhalation
  - Ingestion
  - Dermal (Skin) & eye contact
- Interview responders and/or exposed individuals to obtain additional information about the cyanide exposure within 24-hours.

### Describe Exposed Population

- Determine the following:
  - Geographic area affected.
  - Population affected (general population, employees, and residents).
  - How population exposed (in vicinity, inhalation, or direct contact).
  - Define cases within the exposed population.
  - Contact OEEB (919.707.5900) to assist in developing a risk assessment to be shared with officials.
  - Once completed, provide OEEB with the Chemically Exposed Persons Line Listing.

### Implement Control Measures to Prevent Additional Exposures

- Decide on measures to protect citizens and the surrounding communities.
- The environmental health specialist should consult with OEEB to discuss next steps to ensure no additional individuals are exposed.
- Inform residents/businesses of the cyanide exposure through local emergency notification system, local TV and radio.
  - Important points to include:
    - Location of release/exposure.
    - Geographic area affected.
    - Shelter-in-place instructions.
    - Where to evacuate if needed.
    - Where to find shelter.
    - Where to seek medical care.
    - For more information, please listen to your local radio station or watch...
<table>
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<tr>
<th>INVESTIGATION RESULTS</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Case Finding</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• During the course of the investigation, interview other exposed individuals for symptoms related to the cyanide exposure.</td>
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<td>o Work with your local medical facilities, local incident management team and/or the first responders to compile the exposed persons’ information.</td>
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<td>o Contact local hospitals to determine total number injured, hospitalized, ED visits, and deceased.</td>
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<td>o Contact N.C. DETECT, North Carolina’s state syndromic surveillance system for additional information: 919.843.2361.</td>
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<td>• Advise symptomatic individuals, especially children, to see their healthcare provider immediately for evaluation.</td>
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<th>Routine Precautions</th>
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<td>• Communicate the following control measures with residents/business owners.</td>
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<td>o Remove all ignition sources from the release area.</td>
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Chemical Release Investigation Kit & Template for Local Health Departments

Cyanide Investigation Steps

July 2015

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<td>o Ventilate the area of the spill or leak.</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Evacuate the immediate area around the spill or leak and wait for experts to arrive</td>
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**SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**Risk Communication**

- N.C. DHHS Communications Office 919.855.4840 is available to assist local health departments as needed.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**Glossary of Terms**

- **DENR**: Department of Environment and Natural Resources
- **ED**: Emergency Department
- **EHS**: Environmental Health Specialist
- **EPA**: Environmental Protection Agency
- **OEEB**: Occupational and Environmental Epidemiology Branch
- **PHP&R**: Public Health Preparedness & Response