

## Methyl Bromide

### What is methyl bromide?

Methyl bromide is a colorless chemical (gas or liquid) that is used to kill pests such as insects and rats, as well as fungi. It is generally sprayed in the soil, grain silos, and ship storage holds.

Methyl bromide is odorless at low concentrations. At very high concentrations, it has a sweet, fruity odor.

- Heavier than air, seeks low areas
- Can dissolve in groundwater
- Evaporates quickly

### What are the health effects of methyl bromide?

#### **Exposure to Low Concentrations**

If you breathe in low concentrations of methyl bromide, you may:

- Get a headache
- Feel weak, tired, or nauseated
- Become confused

#### **Exposure to High Concentrations**

If you breathe in high concentrations of methyl bromide, you may:

- Have muscle tremors and seizures
- Have trouble breathing (because it can irritate your lungs or cause fluids to build up in your lungs)
- Have kidney damage and nerve damage

*Skin exposure* can result in itching, redness and blisters.

People who breathe in very high amounts of methyl bromide can die.

For more detailed information about health effects, consult ATSDR's Medical Management Guideline for methyl bromide (Link provided below).

### Where can I get more information?

If you are looking for more detailed information about methyl bromide, consult the following resources.

- **Medical Management Guidelines for Methyl Bromide**  
<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/MMG/MMG.asp?id=818&tid=160>
- **Toxicological Profile for Bromomethane**[PDF - 2 MB] (another name for methyl bromide)  
<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxprofiles/tp27.pdf>

- **ToxFAQ on Bromomethane** <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/tfacts27.pdf>
- **Public Health Statement for Bromomethane**  
<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/PHS/PHS.asp?id=820&tid=160>
- **Methyl Bromide: The Facts** <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/methylbromide/index.html>
- **NIOSH Pocket Guide to Chemical Hazards** <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npg/npgd0400.html>