

All research activities at Ames Laboratory require approval by the Safety Review Committee. The procedure used for this approval is **READINESS REVIEW**. Make sure the activity you are working on has been approved via the Readiness Review procedure and that you are authorized to be performing work. Ask your supervisor.

Work with hydrofluoric acid requires special care. The Iowa State University Chemical Hygiene Plan has prescriptive requirements for work with chemicals.

## Health Hazards of HF

- Fluoride ions readily penetrate skin and tissue which may destroy subcutaneous tissue.
- Exposure to the vapors will cause respiratory damage.
- HF burns take a long time to heal and results in significant scarring.
- Absorbent clothing can hold HF in contact with skin for extended periods of time. Wear the proper protective clothing.

## Storage/Disposal

- Store in an HF-resistant container in a cool, dry location.
- Hydrofluoric acid is a RCRA listed waste in addition to being a characteristic corrosive waste. Contact ESH&A at 4-2153 for appropriate waste disposal procedures.

## Personal Protection

- **Eye protection:** Transparent face shield. Acid-resistant plastic splash goggles (glass will become etched).
- **Gloves:** Neoprene or rubber with long gauntlets.
- **Ventilation:** Use in a hood with at least 100 fpm face velocity.
- **Respirator:** Use a NIOSH-approved respirator with an acid mist cartridge. Consult with ESH&A for appropriate equipment.
- **Clothing:** Rubber apron and rubber sleeve guards. Rubber boots are recommended due to the corrosive nature of HF to leather.

## Handling Precautions

- HF is corrosive. Take all necessary precautions to prevent corrosion of equipment.
- All HF work should be done in a hood.
- All equipment that comes in contact with HF should be thoroughly washed with water immediately after use.
- Hydrofluoric acid should **NEVER** be used in glass containers.

- Contact with metals may cause the release of hydrogen gas which is a fire or explosion hazard.

## First Aid

- **HF burns are SEVERE** and often not immediately noticed.
- **First wash affected area with large amounts of water and treat with calcium gluconate gel.** (Water will not penetrate as well as hydrofluoric acid).
- **Contact** Occupational Medicine, G11 TASF, **for immediate follow up treatment of HF burns.**

## Spill Remediation

- Small hydrofluoric acid spills should be neutralized with soda ash and washed with large amounts of water.
- Large spills of HF should also be neutralized with soda ash. An inert absorbent can be used to soak up the spilled material. The collected waste must be treated as hazardous waste.
- Equipment that has come in contact with HF should be neutralized with soda ash and rinsed with large amounts of water.
- Contact ESH&A at 4-2153 for assistance in spill remediation.
- Notify your supervisor of any spill that has occurred.

## Physical Properties

CAS # ----- 7664-39-3  
Formula: ----- HF  
Synonyms: ----- Fluohydric Acid  
Molecular Weight: ----- 20.01  
Solubility: ----- Miscible in Water  
Density: ----- 48%, 1.150  
Odor Threshold: ----- 0.04 ppm.  
Boiling Point: ----- 48%, 108°C  
*Appearance:*  
Colorless, Fuming Liquid

## Regulatory Information

RCRA: ----- U134

### *Shipping Description:*

Hydrofluoric Acid Corrosive, Poison, 8,  
UN1790

OSHA PEL: ----- 3 ppm

**NOTE: This information is not intended to replace the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS). Always have a current, vendor-specific, hard-copy MSDS in your lab for each chemical.**

## References

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Merck Index, 11<sup>th</sup> ed., Abstract 4717.

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Handout 10200.028 – Rev 3 – 2007

Environment, Safety, Health & Assurance  
G40 TASF – 294-2153

# ***HANDLING OF***

# **HYDROFLUORIC ACID**

**Hydrofluoric Acid users at Ames  
Laboratory are required to complete  
“Hydrofluoric Acid Training” (AL134)  
prior to working with HF**



AMES LABORATORY