



HYDROGEN SULFIDE (H₂S)

What is HYDROGEN SULFIDE?

Hydrogen sulfide is an industrial chemical and is considered a chemical warfare agent. Hydrogen sulfide is a colorless, highly flammable and explosive gas with a rotten-egg odor. Poisoning with hydrogen sulfide can be life threatening.

Signs and Symptoms:

Irritation of the nose, throat and lungs. Inhaling large concentrations causes immediate breathing problems, loss of consciousness and rapid death. Inhaling lower concentrations can cause eye irritation, sore throat, cough, shortness of breath, and fluid in the lungs. Other symptoms include nausea, headaches, dizziness and tremors. Exposure to liquid gas can cause frostbite injury.

Exposure:

Primary route is by either inhalation or absorption through the skin or eyes.

What can you do?

Emergency response leaders may direct people to evacuate or “shelter in place.”

Treatment:

Remove contaminated clothing immediately and wash exposed skin/eyes. Supportive hospital care is often necessary. Certain medications can be helpful if given quickly after exposure.

Diagnosis:

Based on known or suspected exposure.

Whom do you call?

Delaware Division of Public Health: 1-888-295-5156.

For more information:

Visit the CDC website for Emergency Preparedness and Response: www.bt.cdc.gov.