

HYDROGEN CYANIDE (HCN): STANDARDS AND EFFECTS

HCN Effects

Hydrogen Cyanide can cause rapid death due to metabolic asphyxiation.

Death can occur within seconds or minutes of the inhalation of high concentrations.

3,404ppm Death after 1 minute exposure

270ppm Death after 6-8 minute exposure

181ppm Death after 10 minute exposure

135ppm Death after 30 minute exposure

10ppm OSHA permissible exposure limit (PEL)

4.7ppm NIOSH recommended exposure limit (REL)

ppm=parts per million Recent study estimations (Hathaway et al. 1991)

5.6% HCN lower flammable limits in air (percent by volume) 40.0% upper flammable limits in air (percent by volume)



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