Latest Publications

WHO Chemical Risk Assessment Toolkit

The “WHO Human Health Risk Assessment Toolkit: Chemical Hazards” has been updated (2nd edition). The Toolkit provides users with road maps for conducting a human health risk assessment and also provides links to international resources which can be used to obtain globally accepted risk assessment information that has been developed by WHO and other international organizations. The Toolkit, which has been widely used in training activities, has now been updated to incorporate new developments in chemical risk assessment methodologies, new tools, new WHO publications and up to date references, links and information sources. The 2nd edition Toolkit is also being prepared for publication in French, Spanish and Russian.

https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240035720

Systematic review framework

The “Framework for the use of systematic review in chemical risk assessment” provides a high level overview to guide chemical risk assessors in the principles of systematic approaches, to assist chemical risk assessors to understand assessments using systematic approaches and to assist in understanding the issues, limitations and challenges involved in using systematic approaches in assessments. The framework was prepared by a group of experts in a project convened under the umbrella of the WHO Chemical Risk Assessment Network.

https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240034488
Screening Tool of Risks of Indoor Air Pollution

Strong evidence links chemical pollutants in indoor environment to adverse health effects in children. To contribute to addressing this problem, WHO European Centre for Environment and Health developed IAQRiskCalculator, a software for calculating health risks from combined exposure to multiple chemicals in indoor air. The methodological approach to calculation is based on the WHO International Programme on Chemical Safety framework for assessment of risks from combined exposure to multiple chemicals. It was adapted to the needs of indoor air pollution through a number of consultations with experts organized by WHO. The software enables risk assessment at national and local levels and focuses on chemical pollutants that are most common in indoor air in public settings for children such as schools, kindergartens and day-care centres. The tool will be made freely available to risk assessment institutions on request. Please send requests to download the software to euroecgeh@who.int.

Other Publications

WHO/ILO joint estimates of the work-related burden of disease and injury

WHO and ILO published the first joint estimates of work-related diseases and injuries, from a study which considered 19 occupational risk factors including a number of chemical substances considered to be carcinogens such as asbestos, arsenic, benzene, beryllium, cadmium, chromium, formaldehyde, nickel, sulphuric acid and trichloroethylene. Estimates of deaths per year from exposure to these substances ranged from less than 1,000 to more than 200,000. Preventive actions for each risk factor are also outlined in the report. https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240034945

Compendium of published guidance

A systematic compilation of published guidance from WHO and other UN organizations on health and environment includes chemicals and health as one of the thematic areas. The “Compendium of WHO and other UN guidance on health and environment” is a repository of interventions and includes sections on chemical safety and chemical incidents with tools and guidance covering many of the chemicals of major public health concern. https://www.who.int/tools/compendium-on-health-and-environment/chemicals

Online self-training course on the WHO Chemicals Road Map


Drinking-water quality – chemical background documents

The WHO “Guidelines for drinking-water quality” provide authoritative guidance for a broad range of chemicals of potential health concern in drinking-water. For each chemical contaminant or substance considered, a background document evaluating the risks to human health from exposure to that chemical in drinking-water is prepared and periodically reviewed. Draft background documents undergo public and peer review, including by Network institutions. Background documents for the following substances were recently revised:

Asbestos in drinking-water - https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-HEP-ECH-WSH-2021.4