



# Safety Alert

## Chemical Toilet Incident

7 May 2021

The following pages of this safety alert were issued by Highways England's supply chain partner:

**Carnell**

**HEi237**

If you have any queries about this safety alert information announcement or any other safety announcement then please contact **Andrew.Stagg@highwaysengland.co.uk**

**home safe  
and well**

## Chemical Toilet Incident

15 minutes after checking the portable toilet, within a welfare van, an operative started to experience minor chest pains and coughing.

As a precaution and following advice from the NHS 111 helpline the operative attended their local A&E.

After tests the operative was diagnosed with irritation of the airways which subsided within a couple of hours without any medication.

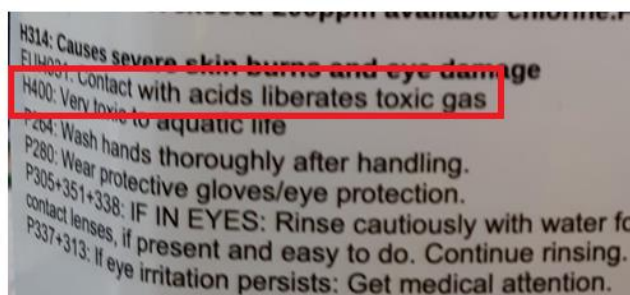
The investigation into this incident identified that the operative had recently emptied the waste cassette and topped it up with bleach.

The waste cassette had previously been filled with chemical toilet disinfectant which had not been washed out before the bleach was added.

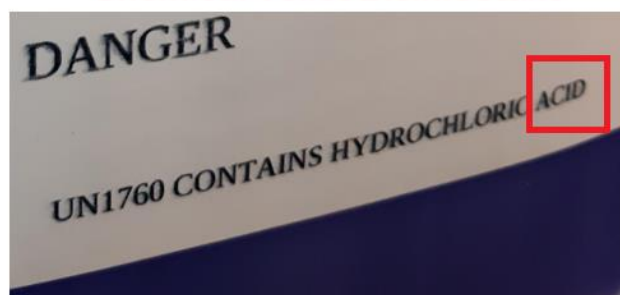
As the 2 substances mixed the acid within the disinfectant caused the bleach to release a toxic fume which was then inhaled by the operative as they checked the toilet.

The labels on both substances contained sufficient information to prevent this incident from occurring.

**Bleach**



**Chemical Toilet Disinfectant**



### **REMEMBER**

- **Always** read and understand the instructions of all hazardous substances prior to use; this includes any general-purpose cleaning products.
- **Always** ensure you have read and fully understood the CoSHH assessment produced for the use of any hazardous substance.
- If you do not have a CoSHH assessment do not use the substance **STOP** what you are doing and report this to your supervisor.

**'Be SAFE' - 'Let's All Go Home Safely'**