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United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

SAFE HANDLING AND DISPOSAL OF CHEMICALS

Where do the handling and disposal of chemicals raise particular problems?

Such problems may occur in **countries with low chemical waste disposal infrastructure, and particularly in remote locations**.

In these areas, waste management infrastructure, established procedures and expert technical support may not always be available to safely handle and dispose of these substances. Thus, there is a particular need for the development of safe removal, storage and disposal procedures in these countries, in order to reduce unacceptable risk to people and communities and to allow the safe and environmentally-responsible management of seized chemicals.

Why is it essential to enhance capacity to handle and dispose of chemicals worldwide?

Laboratories involved in the illicit manufacture of drugs often use large quantities of chemicals, many of which can be **highly dangerous and toxic**. If these substances and the resulting waste are not managed properly, they can cause **serious and immediate risks** to human health, communities, the environment and critical resources such as groundwater, drinking water and agricultural land.

It is therefore important that **chemical disposal operations are conducted in a manner that seeks to reduce or eliminate these risks** by protecting and maintaining clean accessible water resources, reducing pollution, protecting aquatic environments, reducing or preventing land degradation, and protecting local biodiversity, consistent with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

How can UNODC enhance Member States capacity to safely handle and dispose of chemicals?

Upon request, UNODC furnishes c**ustomisable on-site training programmes** to provide guidance on the identification, safe handling, storage and environmentally responsible disposal of seized chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs. These training programmes can be tailored to meet specific needs of beneficiary countries.

Access to **E-learning modules, available online** upon request by Member States, allows participants to gain or enhance their knowledge of the handling and disposal of chemicals at their own pace. In total, there are 4 hours of learning material **with practical field implementation supported by an illustrated manual** offering step-by-step practical instructions to ensure safety and reduce or eliminate the risks to man and the environment.

In addition, **numerous publications** of the UNODC scientific and forensic services programme, including specific information on the clandestine manufacture of substances under international control and the safe handling and disposal of chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs, are available online at:

www.unodc.org/unodc/en/scientists/index.html

Who should participate to the UNODC training services on the safe handling and disposal of chemicals?

The UNODC training on chemical handling and disposal was developed to raise the level of awareness of the risks associated with the management of chemicals and to provide – particularly for remote locations – basic step-by-step practical instructions to support environmentally-responsible and safe handling of these substances.

All stakeholders working in remote locations and having to manage seized chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs are thus targeted by this UNODC training.

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If required, access to E-Learning modules and in-person training workshops can be arranged subject to the availability of funds.

Requests for participating to the UNODC training services on safe handling and disposal of chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs should be channelled through the office of UNODC's Country/Regional Representative. In countries/regions where no such office exists, please contact UNODC Laboratory and Scientific Section at:

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