

Methyl Bromide

Australia | Safework Australia

Agriculture, Mining and Quarrying

Methyl Bromide is a colourless, non-flammable gas with no taste or odour at low concentrations. Methyl Bromide is a very toxic fumigant gas with the main routes of absorption are through inhalation and the skin. While the use of Methyl Bromide has been banned in Australia since 2005, there are exemptions for use in Quarantine and fumigation, specific horticultural uses and ore extraction in mining.



Baseline Testing

A baseline Methyl Bromide health monitoring medical contains the following tests:

- Demographic, medical and occupational history
- Respiratory function and past exposure questionnaire
- Spirometry
- Medical Examination with particular focus on the skin and Neurological system, central nervous system including eyes
- Noting any abnormal lesions and evidence of contact dermatitis
- Pathology – blood bromide levels
- Resp Fit testing
- KINNECT Review and Sign off



Periodic Testing

No periodic testing required.



Post Exposure

Post exposure health monitoring consists of the following tests:

- Respiratory function and past exposure questionnaire
- Spirometry
- Pathology – blood bromide levels – post shift
- KINNECT Review and sign off

Post-shift blood bromide > 12 mg/L (150 µmol/L)

Action required:

- Review work practices
- Re-test in 1 week (the half-life of bromide in blood is 12-14 days)



Biological Exposure Windows

Blood samples should be collected post shift and at the end of the working week.

Please note this information should be taken into consideration by those planning and administering the health monitoring program.



Further Information

Fact Sheets:

https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/23006/health-monitoring-methyl-bromide-guidelines.pdf

<https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/resource-library/hazardous-chemicals/methyl-bromide-technical-fact-sheet>

https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/system/files/documents/1703/managing_risks_of_methyl_bromide_exposure_when_unpacking_shipping

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