

Honeywell
P.O. Box 1039
Morristown, NJ 07962-1039



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June 19, 2009

TSCA Confidential Business Information Center (7407M)
EPA East – Room 6428 Attn: FYI
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460-0001



Dear Administrator:

DCN: 8409000004

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We are reporting an incident involving an over exposure to chlorodifluoromethane (R-22). The incident occurred in England. An individual was carrying a cylinder containing R-22 in his private automobile. He heard a hissing sound. He then found he was unable to see correctly, and pulled over. It appears that he then passed out and was unconscious in the car for some time. He was hospitalized with burns on his legs that could have resulted from frostbit typical of high exposure to refrigerants. To our knowledge he did not have any respiratory distress at the time of this hospitalization. These findings are all well known consequences of acute over exposure to refrigerants. However, in addition to this, a few days later he returned to the hospital with “flu like” symptoms including chest pain and some fluid was drained from his chest. It is not known if these latter symptoms were the result of the exposure or a subsequent infection. Honeywell has been unable to obtain a definitive diagnosis from the English physician treating this individual and has thus far also been unsuccessful in having the individual referred to a pulmonary consultant for evaluation.

R-22 has been in commerce for over 50 years and this delayed effect has never been reported as a consequence of exposure to this material. In fact, in a case reported in 1998, (Kurbat, RS and Pollack, CV. Facial injury and airway threat from inhalant abuse: a case report. J. Emergency Med. 16 (2) 167-169, 1998) it was reported that an individual breathing R-22 through a tube to get high, passed out. The refrigerant continued to flow into his mouth causing severe frostbit on the face and threatened the individual’s airway. Even in this case of extreme over exposure, examination of the lungs and heart was “unremarkable”. There were no reports of delayed pulmonary effects.

While Honeywell does not consider that a direct relationship between the exposure and the delayed pulmonary effects has been established, we can not dismiss this possibility with certainty, especially without a formal report from the individuals physical. We are therefore reporting this as a “For Information Only” notification.

Yours truly,

George M. Rusch, Ph. D.
Director of Toxicology and Risk Assessment

Sheri Blystone, Ph. D.
Global Product Regulatory Leader

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