**Handling Hazardous Materials**

Understanding the basics of hazardous waste handling can prevent catastrophic injuries. Employers and employees should routinely examine the workplace to detect unsafe or unhealthful conditions, practices, or equipment. Proper training is crucial to protect employees while handling hazardous materials.

Below is an essential list of rules to evaluate when around and handling hazardous materials:

* Always use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
  + Inspect PPE before every use to ensure it is suitable.
  + When PPE shows visual signs of wear, tear, or damage, replace it.
* Become familiar with emergency procedures to train employees how to respond if evacuation is necessary.
  + Educate employees on reporting requirements.
* If a coworker is injured or overcome by chemicals, seek immediate care.
* Keep you and your work area clean.
* Hands should be washed thoroughly with soap and water after handling any material.
* Clean work surfaces at least once a shift to minimize contamination exposures.
* Never eat or drink while handling any materials.
  + Wash your hands before handling contact lenses, applying cosmetics, or touching your face.
* Ensure all containers are appropriately labeled and materials are stored in an appropriate container.
  + Any damaged containers or illegible labels should be reported immediately to a supervisor.
* Train employees to understand hazards and precautions by reading labels and safety data sheets (SDS) before handling any material.