



# Ammonia

The information contained on this document was obtained from a variety of sources including the EPA, State of New Jersey, ATSDR and Maine industries. The release data is from required reporting to THWRP, the Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and to EPA Toxics Release Inventory (TRI).

## What is it?

Ammonia is a colorless gas with a strong odor. It is produced naturally by decaying plants and animals, soil bacteria, and animal wastes.

## What is it used for?

Ammonia is used as a refrigerant in cooling systems, to create the two chemicals ammonia sulfate and ammonium hydroxide, and in scrubbers to prevent nitrogen emissions from smokestacks. It is also used in paper machine coatings as a pH control.

## Sources in Maine?

Paper Mills, Semiconductor Plants, Ice Rinks, Cold Storage Facilities, Gun Manufacturers and Chemical Manufacturers.

## Where is it released?

Ammonia is released to air from leaky pipes and valves, scrubber stacks, tank filling operations, kraft pulping and paper coating processes.

## Human Health Effects?

Ammonia is irritating to the skin, eyes, nose, throat, and lungs. Exposure to high concentrations can cause serious burns and high blood pressure, and stop the heart from beating.

## Environmental Effects?

Ammonia is recycled naturally in the environment as part of the nitrogen cycle. It is readily consumed by bacteria and plants. In the air it is removed to land by rain or snow. In the water it changes to ammonium, an odorless liquid.

## 2001 Releases In Maine

# 895,113 lbs

For more information please go to these websites: