

Standard Operating Procedure: Phenol

What you should know about phenol

Phenol should be handled with extreme caution because it is highly corrosive to the skin and readily absorbed through it. It can affect the central nervous system and cause damage to the liver and kidneys. It can also be a mutagen, and might be a reproductive hazard. If heated, it can produce flammable vapors that are highly toxic and explosive.

How to work with phenol

- Whenever possible, work with phenol in a chemical fume hood, especially when heating it. Never heat or melt phenol in an incubator, microwave or drying oven.
- Prevent phenol from contacting skin by wearing gloves and a laboratory coat. Wear chemical goggles to protect the eyes.
- Do not eat, drink, or smoke where phenol is handled since chemical could be ingested.
- Store in a cool, dry, well-ventilated area, away from heat and ignition sources.
- Always wash hands thoroughly after handling phenol, even if gloves are used.