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## Alert after toxic spill

Aug 10, 2005

Six workers at a Black Country company were taken to hospital after a dangerous chemical spillage.

Workers at Clarke Transport were praised by firefighters when they acted quickly after the incident at 2am today.

Shift workers sprung into action at the company's warehouse in Union Road, Oldbury, after a forklift truck punctured a barrel containing 205 litres of potentially lethal methylene chloride.

The chemical, used in a variety of industrial processes including paint stripping, can severely damage the lungs if inhaled.

They were able to cover the 25-litre spillage with earth, then bunged the hole with putty.

Six workers were taken to Sandwell Hospital following the incident for observation.

The six had been suffering from dry mouths.

Sub officer Gary Nock, from Walsall fire station, said: "Methylene chloride gives off a vapour and can cause breathing difficulties and damage to the lungs, so several of the workers were taken to hospital to be checked over, but it looks like they will be fine.

"They acted very quickly and appropriately in the circumstances, isolated the barrel and bunging the leak with putty. Thankfully the chemical did not go into the drainage system and further problems were avoided."

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