



## Hartsfield-Jackson Airport Brownfield October 1, 2008

A Hazmat team responded to an incident where a small amount of brake pad cleaner, containing heptane and toluene, was accidentally sprayed on a restroom countertop. The employee who sprayed the cleaner became dizzy and fainted after inhaling the fumes and was taken to the hospital. The Hazmat team conducted air sampling in the restroom and determined that the volatile organic compound (VOC) reading inside the restroom was 10.6 parts per million (ppm), and 17.6 ppm over the trash can where the can of brake pad cleaner was disposed. The restroom was ventilated and the aerosol can was removed from the building.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has set a limit of 200 ppm of toluene in

workspace air, which is considered to be a level that should not cause adverse health effects if a worker was breathing this air over an 8 hour work period. The levels measured at the airport are far below this limit; however, some people can be more sensitive to smaller VOC concentrations, especially if they have existing preconditions such as asthma.

Although the worker experienced a short-term adverse health effect, once the employee was removed from the VOC source, those effects should disappear quickly. It is not likely that the worker will experience long-term adverse health effects from this acute exposure to brake pad cleaner.