



MEDIA ALERT

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Workplace Safety: Canadian Researchers Create Handheld Sensor for Toxic Benzene Detection

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October 23, 2008. Optomem Sensors, a Canadian company, is introducing a new handheld sensor technology that detects levels of benzene gas, a human carcinogen common in industrial settings as well as service stations and other consumer environments.

Benzene detection is not a simple task, and only recently -- with increased public awareness including some high-profile class action lawsuits -- have significant steps have been taken to regulate and effectively limit benzene exposure.

Benzene is considered a human carcinogen by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), and the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration have limited occupational exposure to benzene. Workers in the petrochemical industry, mechanics, firefighters, and others can be severely affected.

Outdoor air may also contain benzene from tobacco smoke, the transfer of gasoline, exhaust from motor vehicles, industrial emissions and other vapors.

The Canadian researchers have created an affordable, pocket sized product that works in real time. The innovation has been received enthusiastically within industry, because the detection of benzene has typically involved the use of highly sophisticated and expensive instruments. As benzene enters Optomem's hand-held sensor, gas molecules emit electromagnetic wavelengths that are optically detected and digitally processed, almost instantly.

The product is expected to be adopted widely in the workplace to ensure worker health and safety, with a number consumer applications as well.

Optomem Sensors is an innovative leader in the development of micro-optical-mechanical (MOM) gas sensor technology for air quality detection.

Category Health And Safety

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