

# SAFETY FOCUS



Shells are crushed and used as grit in abrasive blasting.



## WALNUT SHELL GRIT FOR ABRASIVE BLASTING & ALLERGY CONCERNS

(5 December 2017)



**KNOW THE HEALTH HAZARDS OF ALL ABRASIVES**

You should know that in recent years organizations performing abrasive blasting have substituted silica abrasives (silicosis health hazard) with items such as crushed Walnut shells, Apricot shells, corn cobs, dry ice, baking soda, coconut shells.

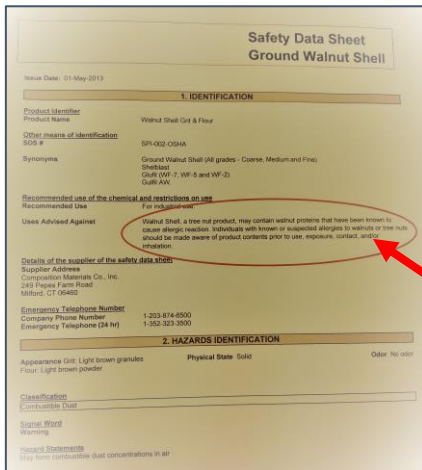
In October 2017 a Canadian worker suffered a fatal allergic reaction after visiting a worksite where crushed walnut shells were used to blast paint off walls (see link below). Airborne shell particulates were obviously present. See link below for more information.

Allergic reactions to work place substances are often overlooked in risk assessments and JSA's. If you fail to plan - you are planning to fail!

Always consult Safety Data Sheets (SDS's) during task planning which will identify health hazards and precautions. Walnut Shell is an organic product and not listed under the Toxic Substance Control Act (TSCA) (not regulated). SDS's may not provide warnings. Packaging may not provide labels/warnings or information on allergic reactions. Note: shell dust can also be a fire hazard without proper ventilation.

**Be very cautious with this material.**

**NOW YOU KNOW**



Pre work planning always involves the review of SDS's. Observe all precautions and include them in Risk Assessments, JSA's & Pre-Work Discussions. Contact manufacturer for information on allergy concerns if SDS's do not address the subject and/or contact an Industrial Hygienist, health or safety official(s).

### USEFULL REFERENCES:

- 1) <https://www.canadianmanufacturing.com/environment-and-safety/man-nut-allergy-dies-work-site-using-walnut-shells-remove-paint-203313/>
- 2) [https://compomat.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Walnut\\_Shell\\_Grit\\_SDS.pdf](https://compomat.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Walnut_Shell_Grit_SDS.pdf)
- 3) <https://www.allergicliving.com/2017/10/23/man-dies-of-anaphylaxis-following-exposure-to-walnuts-used-in-sandblasting/>

Note: For more information on this important subject do a Google search on Walnut Shell Abrasive Blasting.

## NEVER STOP LEARNING!