

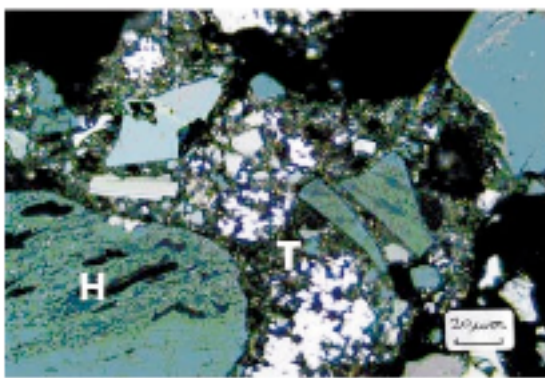


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WHAT IS TAR SLUDGE?



Tar sludge is a hazardous waste that is a by-product of the coking process. It is a dark, sticky substance that poses threats to human health, environmental standards and worker safety.

Tar sludge is also known as coal tar, pad coal, tar decantor sludge, and creosote.

Storing and disposing of tar sludge is difficult because it is a sticky material and it easily melts and spreads out.¹ If the tar sludge is stored outside it runs off in the rain and contaminates the surrounding soil.²

When humans handle the substance without taking proper precautions it can cause watering eyes, itchy skin, rashes and sore throats. It is not a human carcinogen, but it may cause cancer if people are exposed to it over a long period of time.³ When asked to describe the sensation of working with tar sludge, one Coalition member explained, "Imagine your neighbor having his blacktop driveway sealed on the hottest day of the year and multiply by five."

OSHA suggests that whenever possible, coal tar products should be handled automatically. OSHA also recommends that respirators be worn when workers are exposed to the material and that "protective clothing be used to prevent skin contact with coal tars and coal-tar products."⁴

¹ <http://www.allbusiness.com/primary-metal-manufacturing/iron-steel-mills-ferroalloy/263086-1.html>

² Ahn, Sungwoo, David Werner, and Richard Luthy. "Physiochemical Characterization of Coke-Plant Soil for the Assessment of Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbon Availability and the Feasibility of Phytoremediation." *Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry*. 24.9 (2005): 2185-2195.

³ http://ohsconsulting.com.au/data_au.htm?id=1850

⁴ <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/coalpitchvolatiles/solutions.html>