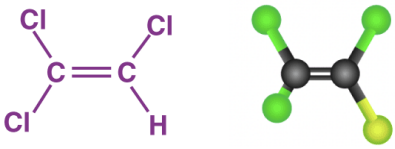
Trichloroethylene (TCE)

What is it:

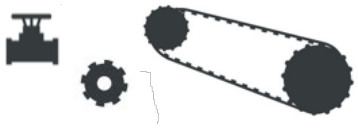
Trichloroethylene is a colorless liquid.



Greater Detail: Liquid trichloroethylene evaporates quickly into the air and has a sweet odor.

How is it used:

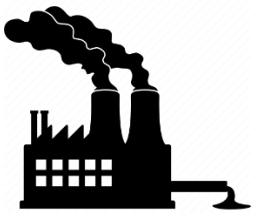
Trichloroethylene is typically used to remove grease from metal parts.



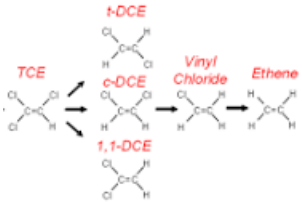
Greater Detail: It is also a chemical that is used to make other chemicals, for example, the refrigerant HFC-134a.

How does the contaminant travel:

Trichloroethylene can be released to air, water, and soil at places where it is produced or used. It breaks down quickly in air and very slowly in soil and water. It does not build up significantly in plants or animals.



TCE Environmental Degradation:



Greater Detail: Trichloroethylene is expected to remain in groundwater for a long time since it is not able to evaporate. Substances that form when TCE particles are broken down include: Dichloroethanes (DCE), Vinyl Chloride, and Ethene.

How do you know you have been exposed:

Exposure to moderate amounts of trichloroethylene may cause headaches, dizziness, and sleepiness. Trichloroethylene is a known carcinogen that can cause increased risk of kidney or liver cancer.

How can you reduce the risk of exposure:

Avoid drinking water from sources that are known to be contaminated with Trichloroethylene and prevent children from playing in and eating dirt near a site that may have contamination.

Source: Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, United States Department of Health and Human Services.