ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

ALERT: NEW RULE FOR METHYLENE CHLORIDE

November 27, 2024

Do you use degreasers, paint strippers, adhesive removers, solvent welding products, or plastic bonding agents?

If so, you may be impacted by a new Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rule covering methylene chloride and need to take action.

- Methylene chloride (also known as dichloromethane) is a volatile solvent used in a variety of consumer and commercial products – including those products shown to the right.
- The EPA determined that there is an unreasonable risk to workers' health for most uses of methylene chloride. Health effects from exposure to methylene chloride include neurotoxicity (i.e., damage to the brain or nervous system) and cancer of the lungs and liver.
- Most uses of methylene chloride will be **prohibited** (including use in paint stripping, adhesive removal, and degreasing) and need to be removed from your inventory by **December 31, 2024**.
- Select uses of methylene chloride will be allowed to continue but will be strictly regulated (including use as a bonding agent for solvent welding and use as a laboratory chemical).

Scan the QR Code to learn more about the new rules and requirements.

CONTACT 206.543.7388 OR EHSDEPT@UW.EDU FOR MORE INFORMATION.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO?

University units and departments that use or possess methylene chloride are required to:

1. **Check your workspace for methylene chloride-containing products.**
    a. **Check ingredient lists** on product labels, Safety Data Sheets, or look for the Chemical Abstract Number **(CAS) 75-09-2.**
    b. **Ensure all items are inventoried in MyChem**.
    c. If your MyChem inventory contains methylene chloride or methylene chloride-containing solutions (≥0.1% by weight), continue to #2.

2. **Review the EPA's Fact Sheet** to determine if your use of methylene chloride is allowed or prohibited under the new rules.

3. **Eliminate methylene chloride or substitute it** for a less hazardous chemical where possible.
    a. Elimination or substitution is **required for prohibited uses** and strongly recommended for allowed uses.
    b. **Find a replacement** for prohibited uses by **December 31, 2024**.

4. Promptly **remove chemicals that are no longer in use**.
    a. Label containers as hazardous waste.
    b. Request a chemical waste collection on the Environmental Health & Safety website.

REPLACEMENTS FOR METHYLENE CHLORIDE

- The EPA has evaluated a **list of alternative products** (Appendix A and B), which can be used to help find replacement products based on condition of use.

- **Choose your replacements carefully.** N-Methylpyrrolidone (NMP), 1-Bromopropane (1-BP), 1,1,2-Trichloroethane (TCE), Perchloroethylene (PCE) are undergoing rulemaking and may face similar restrictions as methylene chloride in the future. The EPA Appendix B: Alternatives Calculator for Solvents can be filtered to specifically exclude these chemicals (www.regulations.gov/document/EPA-HQ-OPPT-2020-0465-0178).