

Methylene Chloride in Indoor Air

Methylene chloride (CAS 75-09-2) is a solvent commonly found in indoor air VOC reports. The EPA has listed methylene chloride as a probable human carcinogen, so it is important to minimize exposure to this solvent. The use of methylene chloride in consumer products has been reduced in recent years in favor of less toxic solvents.

A glance at the NIH Household Products Database entry for methylene chloride (<http://householdproducts.nlm.nih.gov/cgi-bin/household/brands?tbl=chem&id=118>) shows that the majority of products using methylene chloride as a solvent are for outdoor usage, such as automotive products, degreasers, and pesticides. However, paint strippers, varnish removers, and adhesive removers are used primarily indoors and contain large quantities of this solvent. Consumers must be cautious to have adequate ventilation when using these products and to provide continued ventilation in the general area until the vapors have subsided.

Garage usage of the automotive products and degreasers should be minimized because VOCs from the garage can infiltrate the home through unsealed dry wall and through the entry way door to the home. Contaminated clothing can also be a source of entry into the indoor air. Products containing methylene chloride should be stored in tightly sealed secondary containers to minimize vapor diffusion.

About Prism Analytical Technologies, Inc.

Prism Analytical Technologies, Inc. is a leading consultative air testing laboratory in the United States that is devoted to the chemical identification and analysis of contaminants in the air. We are a recognized leader in the development and deployment of ambient air testing methodologies for Fortune 100 and 500 companies, industrial hygienists, and environmental consultants. Prism's science-based technologies and wide range of air testing support help clients solve indoor air quality, process control, industrial, and environmental challenges.