

Hazard: Volatile Organic Compounds

Identity of Hazard(s): Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) are emitted as gases from certain solids or liquids including paints and lacquers, paint strippers, cleaning supplies, pesticides, building materials and furnishings, office equipment such as copiers and printers, correction fluids and carbonless copy paper, graphics and craft materials including glues and adhesives, permanent markers, and photographic solutions. All of these products can release organic compounds while you are using them, and, to some degree, when they are stored.¹

Primary Health Outcome(s): Asthma²

Health Alert! The majority of individual VOCs that may be found in dwellings have no reported health effects. However, some may cause short term irritation and allergic reactions to the eyes, nose, skin and respiratory tract. Allergy sufferers, such as asthmatics, are most vulnerable, and may react to VOC exposure at levels below those that would affect others.²

Gain Control: Actions You Can Take¹

- Use household products according to manufacturer's directions.
 - Make sure you provide plenty of fresh air when using these products.
 - Throw away unused or little-used containers safely; buy in quantities that you will use soon.
 - Keep out of reach of children and pets.
 - Never mix household care products unless directed on the label.
 - Buy limited quantities of these products.
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Local Asthma Resources for Detroit Residents:

- Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, Michigan Chapter: (248) 406-4254
- Wayne Children's Healthcare Access Program (Wayne CHAP): (313) 863- 2427
- Children's Hospital of Michigan (Asthma, Allergy, & Immunology): (313) 745-5437

¹<http://www.epa.gov/iaq/voc.html>

²http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=operating_guidance_hhrs_v1.pdf