



Many of the products used around the home for home improvement projects, repairs, car and lawn maintenance may contain ingredients that can be harmful to your health. These include:

- Oil-based paints
- Varnishes and waxes
- Paint thinners (turpentine, mineral spirits)
- Paint, floor, & varnish strippers
- Stains & Wood preservatives
- Adhesives, glues, epoxy
- Furniture polish
- Mothballs
- Stain removers (spot, rug)
- Pesticides- Insect sprays, weed killer, rat/mouse poisons
- Car waxes and polishes
- Brake fluid oil
- Antifreeze, windshield washer fluid
- Lubricants/degreasers



These products are potentially hazardous. Some are flammable, poisonous if swallowed, corrosive in eyes or on skin, or emit toxic gases. Overexposure may cause health problems such as headache, difficulty breathing, asthma attacks, eye or skin irritation, and internal organ damage as well as burns and accidental poisoning.

Read the labels for warnings and information on product ingredients. Look for a telephone number, address or email for more information and the product Safety Data Sheet (SDS).

To reduce your exposure:

- Buy only as much as you need for the job
- Buy the least toxic product available with fewer hazardous ingredients
- Avoid products with warning labels such as danger, poison, corrosive, toxic, flammable, combustible, caustic.
- Limit use of aerosol sprays
- Use multipurpose products
- Buy safer alternatives wherever possible

Use Safe Methods:

- Follow directions on the label.
- Work in a ventilated area – outdoors, in a garage or in a room with open windows
- Wear personal protective equipment (gloves, goggles) according to the directions on the label

Safer alternatives:

- Latex/water-based paints, stains & varnishes
- Water-based glues
- No or low VOC (volatile organic chemicals) products
- Cedar blocks/chips instead of mothballs
- Vegetable, citrus or mineral oils for polish
- Integrated pest management (IPM) and non-toxic pest traps
- Water-sealing coating for a wood preservative
- Detergent or water-based stripper for floors and wood
- Sandpaper, a scraper or heat gun for stripping paint from small items if it does not contain lead
- Brush or wipe-on products instead of spraying

Storage and Disposal:

- Store products in a secured cabinet out of the reach of children and pets.
- When disposing of toxic products, do not contaminate soil and ground water. Use your local household hazardous (HHW) facility for disposal. Find HHW sites at: www.ct.gov/dep/hhw

