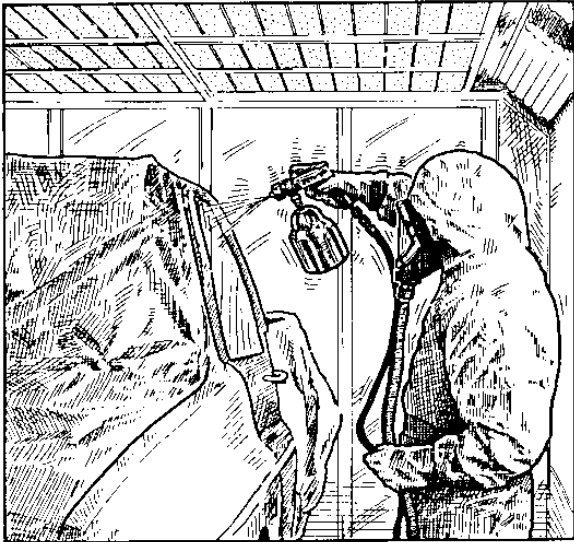


Work **Safe!** Bulletin

ISOCYANATES IN PAINTS

Bulletin No.143
February 1992



Isocyanates may be found in urethane-type paints which produce a durable, hard and glossy finish. Most autobody repair and paint shops are using these products.

Isocyanates are also used in the manufacture of certain types of plastics and insulating foams, as well as in some products used by the woodfinishing industry.

In order to determine whether a product used in your paint spray operations contains isocyanates, read the supplier container label and refer to the Material Safety Data Sheet, available from the product supplier.

Inhaling isocyanates may sensitize a person, causing an asthma-like reaction. This reaction may occur within days of exposure or may take months or years to develop. Once sensitized, a person is likely to experience recurring shortness of breath upon repeated exposure.

Direct skin contact with isocyanates may cause rashes, blistering and reddening of the skin. Repeated skin contact may cause skin sensitization.

Exposure to airborne isocyanates can cause eye irritation and temporary blurred vision. Direct contact with the eye may cause cornea damage.

To protect workers from inhalation, or skin and eye contact with airborne isocyanates, the Workplace Safety & Health Act, M.R. 53/88 Workplace Health Hazard Regulation, requires employers to supply, and cause workers to wear:

- ❑ Supplied air respirators (NIOSH-approved, type C-19C,) with full facepiece protection or hood, operated on pressure-demand or continuous-flow mode, or a self-contained breathing apparatus, with a full facepiece operated in pressure-demand mode. Respiratory protection at workplaces in Manitoba must meet the requirements of CSA Standard Z94.4-M1982, "Selection Care and Use of Respirators."
- ❑ The air supplied to the approved respirator must be free from contaminants. If an oil-lubricated compressor is used, air shall be supplied in accordance with CSA Standard Z180.1-M1978, or in accordance with equally rigorous standards.
- ❑ NIOSH-approved air lines and subassemblies must be used to deliver contaminant-free air to the user. NIOSH approvals are invalidated if an air line or subassembly has been replaced with any other than the respirator manufacturer's.- Appropriate, impervious personal protective clothing--coveralls and gloves designed to protect workers from skin contact with isocyanates--must be used.
- ❑ Appropriate, impervious personal protective clothing -- coveralls and gloves designed to protect workers from skin contact with isocyanates -- must be used.