**EPA Issues Methylene Chloride Ban for Consumers, Industry Use Continues**

EPA has issued a final rule to ban the use of methylene chloride for consumer use. This rule applies to the manufacture, import, process, and distribution of methylene chloride for consumer use. Industrial use, for now, is still allowed.

Methylene Chloride, also known as dichloromethane, is a key ingredient used in paint strippers. It also can be found in some acrylic cements for hobbyists.

EPA has been evaluating high-hazard chemicals through the Toxic Substances Control Act, or TSCA. EPA found the hazards associated with the methylene chloride to be an unreasonable risk. The fumes are heavier than air and can stay in an unventilated area for several hours. The fumes can rapidly cause dizziness, loss of consciousness, and death due to nervous system depression.

Retailers have 180 days after the rule finalization to be in compliance. However, many retailers made pledges to stop selling it long before the rule was finalized. Lowes, Home Depot, AutoZone, PPG and Sherwin Williams agreed to stop selling methylene chloride-containing products by the end of 2018. Walmart agreed to stop selling products online and in stores by the end of February 2019 and Amazon targeted March 2019. Ace Hardware is targeting the end of July 2019.

**Industrial Usage Continues**

In industry, methylene chloride is used not only as a paint stripper, but for general cleaning, automotive care, bath tub refinishing, metal cleaning and degreasing, lubrication, pharmaceutical manufacturing, and lithography.

EPA is still allowing usage in industry in industry at this time, but are is soliciting public comment for future rulemaking which may include training requirements, limited access rules, and/or certification.

On the employee protection side, methylene chloride usage in industry is also subject to OSHA’s Methylene Chloride Standard. This standard lines out specific requirements for usage, medical surveillance, respiratory protection, training, hygiene facilities, protective clothing, recordkeeping, and control measures.