Environmental Compliance Alert

Nail Salons

Alert #2 (5/5/10) - Methyl Methacrylate and Hazardous Waste

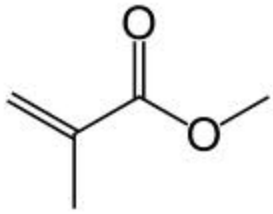
What's an Environmental Compliance Alert?

The Environmental Compliance Alert is published by the Kentucky Division of Compliance Assistance. Its purpose is to proactively raise awareness about compliance issues affecting a specific sector. The alert is intended to stimulate action, encourage facilities to evaluate their environmental practices and facilitate the identification and correction of compliance problems.

The Kentucky Division of Compliance Assistance (DCA) is issuing this alert to inform the nail salon industry of potential environmental responsibilities relating to methyl methacrylate (MMA) usage and disposal. This alert is focused on compliance with Kentucky hazardous waste requirements.

Alert Details

Methyl Methacrylate Is an Illegal Nail Salon Product in the State of Kentucky.



It is illegal for nail salons to apply methyl methacrylate (MMA) to customer's nails due to various nail deformities caused not by the toxicity of the chemical, but from the physical nature of the chemical once it hardens. If salon inspectors discover this material on the premises, it will be considered an illegal product subject to fine and immediate disposal.

MMA Is a Hazardous Waste

Pure MMA, if disposed, is subject to hazardous waste regulations as created from the Resources and Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) of 1976. Within the RCRA regulations, relief is provided for businesses that generate or dispose of less than 220 pounds of hazardous waste in a month. Assuming a salon generates less than 220 pounds of hazardous waste in a month, the salon is exempt from registering as a hazardous waste generator. This means that the salon is not subject to manifesting hazardous waste, but remains responsible to ensure that the hazardous waste has been properly disposed.

Who Should Read This Alert?

- ⇨ Nail Technicians
- ⇨ Salon Owners
- ⇨ Salon Patrons

Action Steps for Managing Methyl Methacrylate

Health Concerns About MMA

- Severe skin irritant
- Allergic reactions are common
- Use of MMA can weaken the nail and damage the nail bed
- Respiratory and eye irritant

Additional Contacts

Division of Waste Management
200 Fair Oaks Lane
Frankfort, KY 40601
waste.ky.gov
502-564-6716

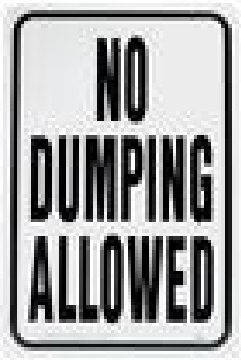
Board of Hairdressers and Cosmetologists
111 St. James Ct., Suite A
Frankfort, KY 40601
kbhc.ky.gov/
502-564-4262

Proper Disposal of MMA

How do you properly dispose of MMA? Allowing the MMA to polymerize by adding the hardener or initiator to the liquid MMA is the easiest and least expensive way to begin the disposal process. Once the MMA and hardener/initiator form a solid, the material may be disposed of by a local solid waste disposal service. The hardener/initiator may be labeled as acrylic powder or something similar. It likely was included with the MMA when purchased. It is the same material used to get the MMA to harden onto the nail.

To begin this process, place the MMA and hardener in a container large enough to hold the MMA and hardener while leaving some head space. Place a lid over the container to contain vapors. Placing the lid over the container will reduce fugitive air emissions. Since the lid may not contain all vapors, this procedure should be conducted outside or in a well-ventilated area.

Do not dispose of MMA by simply allowing it to volatilize to air. This may create an **explosive environment if conducted indoors** or produce an overly negative impact to air quality if conducted outside.



Do not pour the MMA down the drain or toilet. This may also create an explosive environment within the business' plumbing or immediate sewer. It is also against the law to dispose of hazardous substances through the business' plumbing without the approval or consent of the local wastewater treatment provider.

Do not dump MMA on to the ground, ditch or stream. This would be illegal disposal of the material negatively impacting air, soil, groundwater and surface water.

Division of Compliance Assistance
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