What is methylene chloride?

Methylene chloride – also called dichloromethane or DCM – is a colorless liquid and a volatile chemical with a sweet odor. The solvent is used in a variety of consumer and commercial applications, including adhesives and sealants, automotive products, and paint and coating removers.

In April 2024, EPA issued a final rule regulating methylene chloride under the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) to protect human health from health risks such as neurotoxicity effects and cancer from inhalation or dermal exposures.

Who is subject to the methylene chloride regulation?

Anyone who manufactures (including imports), processes, distributes in commerce, uses, or disposes of methylene chloride or products containing methylene chloride may be impacted by EPA's regulation of the chemical. The table below is a summary of key points; full details are in the final rule.

What is the methylene chloride regulation[1] under TSCA?

Workplace Chemical Protection Program

A workplace chemical protection program (WCPP) is required in order to continue 13 conditions of use of methylene chloride. These uses include:

1. Domestic manufacturing
2. Import
3. Processing as a reactant
4. Processing in incorporation into formulation, mixture, or reaction product
5. Processing in repackaging
6. Processing in recycling
7. Use as a laboratory chemical.
8. Use in paint and coating removers for safety critical, corrosion-sensitive components of aircraft and spacecraft
9. Use as a bonding agent for solvent welding
10. Industrial and commercial use as a processing aid
11. Use for plastic and rubber products manufacturing
12. Use as a solvent that becomes part of a formulation or mixture where the formulation or mixture will be used inside a manufacturing process and the solvent (methylene chloride) will be reclaimed
13. Disposal

The WCPP requires that owners and operators of facilities using methylene chloride take appropriate measures to meet new inhalation exposure limits (including 2 ppm as an 8-hour time weighted average) and develop and implement an exposure control plan, among other requirements.

Prohibitions for Consumer Uses

Distributing methylene chloride for consumer use is prohibited after **May 5, 2025**.

Prohibitions for Commercial Uses[2]

Most commercial uses are prohibited after **April 28, 2026.**

Commercial Furniture Refinishing

Methylene chloride may be used for only very specific furniture refinishing until **May 8, 2029**, with workplace protections. After this date, this use is prohibited.

Recordkeeping and Downstream Notification

Manufacturers, processors, and distributors are required to update Safety Data Sheets to spread awareness throughout the supply chain. Relevant SDS must be updated by **October 7, 2024** for manufacturers and **December 4, 2024** for processors and distributors.

[1] Details of these requirements are in 40 CFR Part 751, subpart B, available at https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-40/part-751/subpart-B.

[2] There is a TSCA section 6(g) exemption for the emergency use of methylene chloride for NASA in furtherance of their mission. Only NASA and its contractors are exempted for a narrow set of conditions of use.

June 4, 2024
EPA Document Number #740F24001

Compliance Timelines* for the Workplace Chemical Protection Program

Initial Monitoring	Exposure Limits	Exposure Control Plan	Other Monitoring
Complete initial monitoring. Demarcate regulated area within 3 months of initial monitoring data. Provide respiratory protection within 3 months of initial monitoring data but no later than 15 months after final rule. Existing Facilities Before **May 5, 2025** (360 days after final rule publication). New Facilities Within 30 days of initiating use.	Ensure methylene chloride inhalation exposures do not exceed the ECEL (2 ppm as an 8-hr TWA) and EPA STEL (16 ppm as a 15-min TWA) for all potentially exposed persons. Provide PPE if applicable. Existing Facilities Before **August 1, 2025** (450 days after final rule publication). New Facilities Within 90 days of initial exposure monitoring.	Develop and implement an exposure control plan. Notify potentially exposed persons of completion of exposure control plan within 30 days of its completion. Provide requested records by a potentially exposed person within 15 days of request. Existing Facilities Before **October 30, 2025** (540 days after final rule publication). New Facilities Update as necessary, but at least every five years.	Periodic Monitoring Conduct every **5 years.** As Needed Monitoring Conduct additional monitoring after any change that may introduce additional sources of methylene chloride exposure or result in a change in exposure levels.

* Longer timeframes for Federal agencies and contractors acting for or on behalf of those agencies. See final rule for details.

For More Information

- For information or questions on the regulation of methylene chloride under TSCA, visit www.epa.gov/assessing-and-managing-chemicals-under-tsca/risk-management-methylene-chloride or contact MethyleneChlorideTSCA@epa.gov.
- For general questions and document requests about TSCA requirements, contact the TSCA Hotline at 1-800-471-7127 or tsca-hotline@epa.gov.
- For general information or questions on environmental regulations and compliance for small business owners, visit https://www.epa.gov/resources-small-businesses/asbestos-and-small-business-ombudsman or contact asbo@epa.gov.

June 4, 2024
EPA Document Number #740F24001