



PLAYING IT **SAFE**

Painting Safely

Tips for protecting yourself when using paint

The area dedicated to paint mixing is a more dangerous place than you might expect because of all the toxic chemicals in the paints you are using. To avoid injuries and illnesses when you are working with paint, practice the following safety precautions.

Put a Lid On It!

Not only is an open container of paint or solvent a waste of money, it also contaminates the air. By putting a lid on it, you will keep harmful vapors out of the clean air that you breathe in. You will also save materials by not allowing expensive paints and coatings to evaporate or to become contaminated by air exposure.

Wear a Respirator

Vapor-generating materials and equipment permeate most paint mixing rooms. Despite this, wearing a respirator will decrease the amount of harmful vapors you breathe in from paints and solvents. When mixing paint, always wear an air-purifying respirator with an organic vapor cartridge. Some other things to consider:

- Make sure the respirator forms a tight seal on your face. Males should be clean-shaven where the mask touches the face for optimal protection.
- Change the cartridge on a regular basis, as outlined by the manufacturer.

Cover Up!

Your skin and eyes also need protection from hazardous paint materials. Many

chemicals in coatings and solvents are not only strong irritants, they can also pass through your skin and can damage your internal organs. To avoid unnecessary problems, be aware of the variety of chemicals that you use in the mixing room, and wear chemical-resistant gloves and a paint suit that offers adequate protection.

Some other things to consider:

- Wear nitrile or butyl rubber gloves (not latex) to protect your skin from chemicals.
- Always follow the manufacturer's recommendations regarding when to change your gloves to ensure that you are receiving optimal protection against chemicals. Also, if you notice a tear or puncture in your gloves, discard them right away.
- Wear a full face-piece respirator to protect your eyes. If you are wearing a half-mask respirator, goggles or a face shield will provide adequate eye protection as well.

Reduce Waste

When you reduce waste, you reduce costs while helping the environment. Therefore, mix only the amount of paints and coatings that you need. Also, store and reuse left-over primers and basecoats to avoid unnecessary waste.



Fresh Air is Key

When working with paints, be sure to provide yourself enough ventilation in the work area. Confined spaces will concentrate hazardous fumes and small particles, increasing your risk of exposure.