

## A safety guide for DO-IT-YOURSELF(DIY)ers & Retailers

# HEALTHY INDOOR PAINTING PRACTICES

## A Painter's Guide to Ventilation Best Practices How to Reduce Your Exposure

*This information refers only to interior alkyd (or oil-based) paint containing 2-Butanone oxime (MEKO); MEKO is not found in any of the widespread latex or waterborne products.*

Since clean air is essential for good health, the quality of indoor air is particularly important. Good ventilation is needed indoors whenever you are using paint products containing chemical substances, specifically alkyd paint products which contain solvents and 2-Butanone oxime (MEKO), that are labelled with warning statements about ventilation. Although Canadian alkyd or oil-based paint products follow current national and international standards, it is important to always respect the manufacturers' instructions about ventilation.

Here are some ventilation best practices to follow when you use alkyd paint products indoors:

- ✓ Always read, understand and carefully follow all ventilation requirements indicated on labels;
- ✓ Take measures to maximize the amount of fresh air where you paint; you should not rely on home heating or cooling systems to provide fresh air. Try to schedule painting so that you can open windows and doors to the outside;
- ✓ It is recommended that you create cross-ventilation when painting by opening windows and doors that are across from each other and/or using a fan to blow air outdoors (if there is no warning on the paint label instructing against the use of electric motor fans). Kitchen and/or bathroom fans that are vented outside can also help;
- ✓ Take fresh air breaks while painting and keep young children, pregnant women and people with breathing problems away from freshly painted rooms. Leave painted areas if you experience eye watering, headaches, dizziness or breathing problems;
- ✓ Cover your paint can during use and quickly dispose of rags and accessories after you have finished with your project. Unused or leftover alkyd paint can be disposed of through the paint recycling program in your province;
- ✓ Remember to continue using proper ventilation for two to three days after you finish painting;
- ✓ MEKO and other chemicals may still be present in low VOC (volatile organic compound) alkyd paint so remember to always create well-ventilated conditions;
- ✓ It is a misconception that infrequent use of alkyd paint poses no health risk. Proper precautions and ventilation are required every time the product is used.

### PROTECTING CONSUMER HEALTH: CODE OF PRACTICE FOR 2-BUTANONE OXIME (MEKO)

Health Canada and Environment Canada have published a Code of Practice for 2-Butanone oxime or MEKO, a chemical commonly used as an anti-skinning agent in the formulation of alkyd paints, primers, varnishes and stains. Anti-skinning agents are added to prevent a film from forming on the surface of the paint during storage.

The objective of this code is to help reduce the general public's inhalation exposure to MEKO during and immediately following interior application of consumer alkyd paint and coatings products. A key element of the Code of Practice is an educational campaign supported by the Canadian Paint and Coatings Association (CPCA) and its paint manufacturer members to further remind consumers to maintain well-ventilated conditions during and following indoor use of alkyd paint and coatings and to provide general information as to how to ventilate adequately.



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ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE  
DE L'INDUSTRIE DE LA PEINTURE  
ET DU REVÊTEMENT

For more information about the importance  
of ventilation, contact your retailer or go to  
[www.canpaint.com](http://www.canpaint.com)