



Stay Safe When Spray Painting

Spray painting is an efficient and effective way to cover large areas or irregular surfaces with even coats of primer, paint, sealers and other coatings. When you are using spray paint, it is important to recognize and guard against potential hazards.

Why it is Dangerous

Many paints, coatings, catalysts, sealers, hardeners and solvents contain hazardous chemicals to which you could be exposed during mixing, spraying, grinding and sanding tasks. Overexposure can cause nausea, rash, asthma, dermatitis or even lung cancer. In addition, some coatings contain flammable substances, which are released into the air when you use high-pressure equipment. As they build up, these vapors can create an explosion hazard. To protect yourself from these and other health hazards, study the following guidelines to safe spray painting practices.

Ways to Protect Yourself

Before beginning a new task, consult the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for each product you will use. You will find information specific to that chemical, including its hazards, appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), proper handling, transport, storage and disposal.

General Recommendations

- Use a spray booth to avoid breathing in spray paint vapors and debris. Regularly maintained and cleaned spray booths also provide maximum protection against explosion hazards.
- Wear hearing protection when working with air powered tools. Extended exposure to loud noises can result in irreversible damage to your hearing.
- To protect your eyes, wear safety glasses and a dust mask or respirator to protect against dust particles that form when using grinding and sanding equipment.
- Wear a combination type HEPA air filter and organic vapor respirator with breathing air lines to protect yourself from hazardous fumes.
- Wear lightweight, disposable coveralls, or launder reusable coveralls separately from street clothes.

- Never eat, drink, smoke or apply cosmetics while working with spray paint. Store food and other belongings in a separate area.
- Store paints and their solvents carefully in ventilated, nonsmoking areas to prevent the possibility of ignition and explosion.
- Since you may have to hold full paint pots while spraying, you must keep ergonomics in mind while on the job. Use balanced spray guns that fit in your hand or use a hoist and dolly to move materials instead of holding them. Take frequent, short breaks throughout the workday to stretch to avoid unnecessary strains and sprains.

Keep Safety in Mind

Keeping safety in mind when working in and around spray painting operations will help you avoid dangerous hazards and keep you injury-free on the job. If you have any doubt about your safety, regarding spray painting or any other issue, talk to your supervisor.

Safety tips developed based on generally accepted safety standards believed to be reliable at the date of publication. Information is for general guidance only and should not be relied upon for legal compliance purposes.

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