



Health & Safety

Labelling of Health and Safety precautions for paint products is a legal requirement and forms a specific section on our labels. However the words are laid down by law and are often difficult to understand. In this section we try to guide you through the symbols and text in order to enable you to take on board some of the advice given. In addition some further information is provided to make applying paint a safer job. Before starting work always read the label. Each tin will display a number of warning symbols and written warning phrases which will quickly indicate those areas where particular care should be taken. Potential risks, and measures needed to protect yourself during application, are shown below:

WARNING SYMBOLS

Corrosive – This material will attack the eyes and skin and can give you burns.

Harmful – This material may harm you from skin contact, from breathing in or ingesting. The wording will indicate which.

Irritant – This material may cause a skin rash.

Highly Flammable – A spark or cigarette end will start a fire, more easily than with petrol. Paint or thinners in tins, or vapours in the air, can catch fire or explode.

General Precautions – Other general safety precautions are detailed below and will help should any problem occur whilst using our paints.

PERSONAL HEALTH

Avoid Ingestion – Food and drink should not be prepared or consumed in areas where paint is stored or is being used. In cases of accidental paint ingestion seek immediate medical attention. Keep the patient at rest, do NOT induce vomiting.

Avoid Inhalation – The inhalation of solvent vapour from paint or dust from sanding can be reduced by the provision of adequate ventilation or extraction. If this is not sufficient or if specifically stated on the label, suitable respiratory protection should be used. Wear a cartridge type respirator when abrading old antifoulings with wet and dry paper – never burn off or dry sand antifouling as this may create harmful fumes or dust.

In badly ventilated areas wear an air fed hood or cartridge respirator with organic vapour filter. Solvent fumes are heavier than air. Breathing these fumes can make you dizzy, feel drunk and headachy and could even result in collapse. Read the label carefully and ensure that the recommended protection is worn. Spray painting creates additional health hazards. Spray mists should not under any circumstances be inhaled. Read the label carefully and ensure recommended protection is worn; generally an air-fed hood is the best protection as it provides a fresh air feed to the user.

Avoid eye contact – Eye protection should be used during application and when there is any risk of paint splashing on the face. Safety glasses or goggles are inexpensive, available from many DIY stores, and are well worth wearing. Use eyewear that complies with appropriate local standards. If material does contaminate the eye, it is recommended that the eye is flushed with clean fresh water for at least 15 minutes, holding the eyelids apart, and medical attention sought.

Avoid skin contact – Skin irritation can occur from contact with paint products. You should, therefore, always wear protective gloves and protective clothing when applying or mixing any paint products. Overalls, which cover the body, arms and legs, should be worn. Skin cream, of a non-greasy barrier type, may be used on the face. **Do NOT use petroleum jelly as this can help the absorption of paint into the body.** Remove rings and watch straps before commencing work, as these can trap paint particles next to the skin. Remove any paint that does get onto the skin by washing with warm water and soap or an approved skin cleanser. After washing, apply a skin conditioner. Never use solvent or thinners to clean the skin.

THE RISK OF FIRE OR EXPLOSION

Most paints contain organic solvents – some of which evaporate into the air upon opening the container. Any dangers can be reduced if a few simple precautions are taken:

- ~ **Avoid naked flames** where paint is being stored, opened or applied
 - ~ **Do not smoke**
 - ~ **Store paint in a well-ventilated, dry place** away from sources of heat and direct sunlight
 - ~ **Keep the tin tightly closed**
 - ~ **Avoid sparks** from metals, electrical appliances being switched on and off, or faulty electrical connections
 - ~ **Do not leave paint soaked rags lying around**, in the pockets of overalls or in waste bins
- Some types of paint can dry out and auto-ignite**