

## EPA releases TDI and MDI action plan summaries to protect consumers

Under new action plans released for TDI and MDI by the EPA these chemicals will face stricter regulation due to concerns about health effects such as breathing and skin problems. These chemicals are already recognised as a leading cause of work related asthma, according the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA), in the US, the body responsible for setting exposure limits in the workplace. Exposure to these chemicals is unregulated in the consumer market.



Lisa Jackson – EPA  
Administrator

The agency has released two action plans relating to the use of TDI and MDI respectively. One focuses on TDI and related compounds, the other on MDI and similar chemicals: MDI monomers and related isomers and polymers; and MDI dimers, trimers, and polymers.

The main focus of EPA's efforts is do-it-yourself consumer products such as spray foam insulation, concrete sealers, adhesives, and floor finishes. In contrast to polyurethane foam used in mattresses, some DIY products may contain uncured diisocyanates, according to the agency.

"There has been an increase in recent years in promoting the use of rigid spray foams and sealants by do-it-yourself energy-conscious homeowners' says **Steven Owens, EPA assistant administrator for chemical safety & pollution prevention.** "Many people may now be unknowingly exposed to risks from these chemicals."

Under the new action plans, the EPA intends to issue a rule under the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) requiring manufacturers to notify them before using uncured TDI and related polyisocyanates in consumer goods. The EPA will also consider implementing a voluntary phase-out of products using uncured TDI. However, if this proves difficult, the agency will consider regulation to require makers of TDI and related chemicals to monitor exposure to the compound in consumer goods.

Manufacturers of both TDI and MDI will be asked to report any allegations of significant adverse effects from exposure to these chemicals. The agency will also require these companies to submit any unpublished health and safety data they have on these compounds. The EPA is also considering regulations to require manufacturers of diisocyanates to conduct exposure monitoring studies for commercial products with uncured TDI and MDI. The agency may also regulate the commercial uses of diisocyanates in situations where the general public might be exposed to uncured TDI and MDI. In addition, regulations are being considered to control the use of uncured MDI in consumer products.

"We look forward to a productive exchange with EPA on the action plans," says Kathryn St. John, spokesperson for the American Chemistry Council (ACC), an association of chemical manufacturers.

The ACC has already created programs to ensure the safe use of spray polyurethane foam, truck bedliners and automotive refinish spray paints all of which contain diisocyanates.

### Adresse:

<http://www.gupta-verlag.com/polyurethanes/news/industry/9787/epa-releases-tdi-and-mdi-action-plan-summaries-to-protect-consumers>