

Use of Solvent Based Painting Materials on Building Projects

Solvent-based painting products are not to be used on building maintenance or construction projects when students are present in the building.

In cases of emergency and upon assignment by the building principal and the manager of buildings and grounds, oil-based paints may be used in a defined building area; however, that building area is to be closed down or inaccessible to students.

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Introduction

Good indoor air quality contributes to a favorable learning environment for students, a good working environment for teachers and staff and a sense of comfort, health and well being for all. These combine to assist a school in its core mission, educating children.

Considerations

Factors to consider before beginning painting in buildings are as follows:

Surface preparation is very important and should be done as necessary; however, special care should be taken to limit dust when sanding is required.

Type of paint is an important decision. Both solvent-based and water-based paints give off volatile organic compounds (VOC's) that could lead to indoor air quality problems. Water-based paints produce fewer VOC's than solvent-based paints; however, they may produce them over a longer period of time.

Durability is also very important. The water-based paints at some locations may not hold up and thus require painting more often.

Notification

Notification to building administrative staff will be given by the Buildings and Grounds Department when major painting projects are being considered and planned.

Painting

During painting, exposure of students, staff members and others to odors and contaminants should always be considered and minimized. Where possible, the use of water-based products will be maximized. The use of solvent-based products will be minimized. The use of solvent-based products may be used where necessary due to the surface painted or where needed for durability. Solvent-based products will be used at times when the occupant load is at the lowest possible level. When possible, areas will be ventilated by the use of windows, mechanical units and fans to minimize odors.

Concerns

The health and safety of all students, staff members and others is a primary consideration when painting crews undertake any maintenance and/or painting improvement project. The Buildings and Grounds Department should be informed of any building or staff concerns of any project. Every effort will be made to mutually resolve issues on a case by case basis.