

Paint stripping is undergoing a face-lift with the development of safe alternatives to products that contain methylene chloride.

Vliegenthart of Holland were finalists in the APCS 2004 Environmental Award for the promotion of these technologies to the Asian coatings industry.

Say NO to methylene chloride with eco-friendly paint strippers

At the coatings show in Bangkok on the 3-4 June, one of the finalists in the sustainable technology awards, Vliegenthart of Tiel, Holland, was exhibiting its Bio Fluxaf Aqua range of paint and coatings removal products. These innovative products, which carry the INVISTA/DuPont DBE logo, are water-based, non-toxic, and marketed by Vliegenthart BV through a licence arrangement with the patent owners, Eco Solutions Limited, based in the UK.

The owner of Vliegenthart, Mr Robert Le Rutte stated '....The interest received at the exhibition for this technology has been overwhelming and we are looking forward to expanding into the Asia/Pacific market with this revolutionary technology. We feel confident that many international companies will now wish to use this technology, particularly now that Sony in France have fully tested and installed an Eco Decap Stripping Station for cleaning their ink cleaning machinery.

Under a newly launched partnership between INVISTA (formerly DuPont Textiles & Interiors) and Eco Solutions Ltd, consumers and professionals in the UK, Europe, Canada & USA are now able to purchase a range of products containing dibasic esters, which will be clearly marked with the DBE logo. Eco Solutions markets world-wide a range of safe and effective coatings removal products, from paint strippers and graffiti removers to nail polish removers, which can be used without any of the usual risks that are associated with hazardous solvents.

GLOBAL MARKETPLACE

In the UK they are available in major DIY stores such as B&Q, FOCUS, John Lewis Partnership and many independent hardware stores and carry a CE mark for safety for use as a children's toy. Eco Solutions' Managing Director, Ivor Chivers states

'We were delighted to support Robert Le Rutte at the Asia Pacific Fair in bringing our technology to a wider audience. Also, with the help of our new partnership with INVISTA/DuPont we have to move into new markets world-wide, including the USA where our technology has been adopted by US giants Chrysler and PPG.'

Until recently, paint stripping has been perceived as presenting an almost unavoidable risk to both the environment and the health of the DIY enthusiast or professional decorator.

Many commercial paint stripping and coatings removal products are either solvent or caustic based, and in most cases, the main ingredient in paint stripper products is dichloromethane, also known as methylene chloride.

This material gives off potentially hazardous fumes and can cause irritations when it comes into contact with the skin, and is listed as a class III carcinogen in the EU, and banned in paint strippers in some US States as well as Austria and Sweden.

Now, thanks to product and material research by Eco Solutions Ltd, there is an alternative, which is not only safe to use but is also biologically degradable. And that's not all! Paint stripping products containing DBE dibasic esters from INVISTA (formerly DuPont Textiles & Interiors), are now available in a complete package for industry with an immersion Eco Decap Stripping Station - a collaboration between Eco Solutions in the UK, Vliegenthart's daughter company Rutolan in France, and Prodrox - inventors of the Eco Decap Stripping Station especially developed to be used with Eco Solutions technology.

The first such stripping station opened in Ussel, France, in September 2003.

Philip Malsoutte, the sixth generation of painters-turned-entrepreneurs confirms that stripping using Eco Decap Station based on DBE offers much greater protection not only for the workers and the environment, but also for the item being stripped.

M. Malsoutte explains '...due to the much lower toxicological risk of Bio Fluxaf Aqua based on DBE operators do not need to wear masks or breathing apparatus which is both uncomfortable and expensive'.

GLOBAL GROWTH

The technology world-wide is growing:-

- UK - Home Strip available at major DIY stores, including B&Q & FOCUS.
- Switzerland - Toxic Class Free listing for Home Strip
- France & The Netherlands - Bio Fluxaf Aqua Decap in France supplied via Akzo Nobel
- South Africa - Graffiti Go! used by South Africa Railways
- USA - EXP21 fully tested and used in Chrysler car assembly plants and the paint stripper gel marketed by PPG through many DIY stores.

APC

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Safer paints strippers using DBE are now available