

How to stay safe when stripping paint

In recent years the consumer has become more demanding in terms of the environment and their family's wellbeing, which has been reflected in a wide range of areas such as the growth of low odour paints and varnishes, natural products, organic foods, fair trade products, etc. etc.

With regard to DIY, one of the most dangerous DIY jobs is stripping of old paintwork/varnishes etc. in and around the home. This is due to the fact that the traditional hazardous paint strippers contain an ingredient called methylene chloride, or sometimes called dichloromethane (DCM). This ingredient causes dizziness, nausea and even death in severe cases (a list of fatalities/incidents can be found on the European Association for Safer Coatings Removal website: www.eascr.org). Classified as a Class 3 Carcinogen, and 'very high' VOC, DCM evaporates quickly and is easily inhaled. It can also cause problems for people with heart, lung or blood diseases. Prolonged high exposure can cause liver & kidney damage.

Now, the EU has passed legislation to further restrict the use of DCM products, in particular to the consumer. In January of this year the European Commission passed a law to totally ban DCM paint strippers to the consumer (who are least aware of the dangers of dichloromethane and who have least access to protective equipment), plus a general ban to professionals operating outside industrial premises, and Member States can opt to allow further use by professionals *but only* with adequate training together with a licence to operate.

But, why wait for this to become law in 2011? Take action now!! Use a safe alternative.

So, how do you strip paint and stay safe?

1. Use a non-DCM paint stripper or water-based products – such as Home Strip® from Eco Solutions Limited (www.ecosolutions.co.uk). Take care to read label information carefully – if not using Home Strip®. Some non-DCM products contain N-methyl Pyrrolidone (NMP), which is dangerous for pregnant women.
2. Always clear away paint waste straight away to avoid contaminating other areas.
3. Remember that lead-based paints are normally present in properties over 40 years old – this type of paint is particularly dangerous for young children. Using a water-based paint stripper such as Home Strip® will reduce the risk of exposure to lead because the product encapsulates any lead particles into the emulsion, preventing dangerous airborne particles. Never sand painted surfaces which you suspect may contain lead based paint.

From the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) website (www.handandlass.org.uk) there is information on admissions to hospital of at least one per day where accident victims have been using paint stripper or paint thinners.

Remember to prepare well for the job, and use the product company's technical or customer care line telephone number to ensure you are properly protected.

For safe products which look after everyone's interests, contact Eco Solutions Limited on Tel: 01934 844484, Fax: 01934 844119, E-mail: info@ecosolutions.co.uk or visit: www.ecosolutions.co.uk and www.strip-paint.com

Looking to the future

Future Roofs Ltd is an environmentally aware flat roofing company. It is also able to advise on, supply and install all aspects of green roofing.

For many years the company has specialised in the installation of Firestone EPDM rubber membrane roofs. Its expertise has been appreciated on many commercial and private projects. Firestone rubber has a proved longevity of 50 years plus, it has a low impact on the environment, is chemically inert and contains no toxic materials.

With an eye to the future of the planet, and its business, green roofing was a natural progression for this company. To use a product on a roof which improves insulation, enhances biodiversity, and reduces the chance of flash flooding was an opportunity that Future Roofs was determined not to miss.

It now offers not only the waterproofing layer needed under all green roofs, but can supply and install the whole green roof. To give a full 'one-stop shop' service they also offer ongoing maintenance contracts.

Future Roofs' sister company, Yorkshire Sedum Ltd, grows sedum plug plants, matting and modules for use on green roofs. This company is well placed – being in the centre of the country and at an altitude of 1200ft, to grow well acclimatised plants delivered nationwide with a low carbon footprint.

For free quotations and further information, contact Future Roofs Ltd on
Tel: 01226 792643,
E-mail: info@futureroofs.co.uk
or visit: www.futureroofs.co.uk



Home Strip® Paint & Varnish Remover –

SAFE for both the user and the environment.
Readily biodegradable – water based – removes all types of paint – oil-based, water-based – and in particular lead-based paints safely.

- No skin burns
- No fumes (*can work indoors safely*)
- Safe around children and pets



Home Strip is just one of a number of safe products from Eco Solutions – visit our website

www.strip-paint.com for more information and stockists, or telephone our helpline **01934 844484**

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