

SAFETY NOTICE

Environmental Health & Safety | November 2025

Methylene Chloride in Laboratories

Workplace exposure to methylene chloride is regulated for products with concentrations of 0.1% or greater by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (29 CFR 1910.1052) and the Environmental Protection Agency (40 CFR 751 Subpart B).

These regulations require the implementation of a Workplace Control Prevention Plan (WCPP), including an exposure control plan to reduce potential exposure to a concentration below the following limits:

1. EPA Existing Chemical Exposure Limit (ECEL) of 2 parts per million (ppm)
2. EPA Existing Chemical Exposure Limit - Action Level (ECEL Action Level) of 1 ppm
3. EPA Short Term Exposure Limit (EPA STEL) of 16 ppm

Compliance with the Rule

To comply with continued use of methylene chloride, the following must be completed:

1. Complete ELS 032 - Methylene Chloride Safety Training, available online through [Brightspace](#)
2. Contact EH&S for initial monitoring
3. Ensure chemical fume hood is operational and certified within the past year
4. Purchase chemical resistant gloves for methylene chloride procedures
5. Review all other aspects of the [Methylene Chloride Exposure Control Plan Policy](#) to ensure compliance

[EPA's Risk Management Guide for Methylene Chloride](#)

What is Methylene Chloride?

Methylene chloride (CAS # 75-09-2), also called dichloromethane or DCM—is a colorless liquid and a volatile chemical with a sweet odor. The solvent is used in a variety of laboratory applications, including extraction, purification, and synthesis due to its solubility, polarity, aprotic and dense nature.

Best Practices for Methylene Chloride

- Purchase and use smaller containers (4 Liters and smaller) by not needing to handle larger containers outside of a chemical fume hood
- Keep containers closed, except when in use
- Store in chemically compatible containers, labeled with the chemical name and appropriate hazard warnings
- Store away from heat sources

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