

Chemical Fact Sheet
**VOLATILE ORGANIC
COMPOUNDS (VOCs)**



Cancer & Environment Network
of Southwestern Pennsylvania

What are Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) ?

Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) are a class of chemicals that are emitted as gases into the air from certain substances. Some VOCs cause a variety of adverse health effects including cancer. Common examples of VOCs are benzene, toluene, and formaldehyde.

Where are Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) Found?

Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) occur inside and outside the home. Some common sources of VOCs are **paints, paint strippers, wood preservatives, aerosol sprays, cleansers and disinfectants, moth repellents and air fresheners, stored fuels and automotive products, hobby supplies, dry-cleaned clothing, and pesticide**

For a safer option, look for home products that are labeled with "low VOCs" and allow new carpets and building products to air outside before installing them

Allow for ventilation in your home to help reduce the concentration of VOCs indoors.

Why are Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) Concerning?

VOCs are known to cause a variety of health issues including, respiratory irritation and nerve and organ damage. Some VOCs, such as benzene, formaldehyde and more are known to cause cancer in humans.

Where can I find more information about Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)?

To learn more about this hazardous chemical, please visit the following organization's websites and resources:

Scientific Government Resources:

- [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\): Volatile Organic Compounds' Impact on Indoor Air Quality](#)
- [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\): Technical Overview of Volatile Organic Compounds](#)

Consumer Support Information:

- [American Lung Association: Volatile Organic Compounds](#)

NOTE: All links for additional information are trusted sources. If you would not to know more , or have questions, please contact us at info@CENSWPA.org.