



Steps to Reduce Exposure to PCB's

Did you know the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced a series of steps that building owners and school administrators should take to reduce exposure to PCBs that may be found in caulk in many buildings constructed or renovated between 1950 and 1978. Exposure to these PCBs may occur as a result of their release from the caulk into the air, dust, surrounding surfaces, soil and through direct contact.

The US EPA is also conducting new research to better understand the risks posed by caulk containing PCBs. This research will guide EPA in making further recommendations on long-term measures to minimize exposure as well as steps to prioritize and carry out actions to remove the caulk to better protect public health.

EPA recommends the testing of peeling, brittle, cracking or deteriorating caulk directly for the presence of PCBs and removing the caulk if PCBs are present at significant levels. Alternately, the building owner can assume PCBs are present and proceed directly to remove deteriorating caulk.

In addition, building owners and facility managers are recommended to consider testing to determine if PCB levels in the air exceed EPA's suggested public health levels. If testing reveals PCBs in the air above these levels, building owners should be especially vigilant in implementing and monitoring ventilation and hygienic practices to minimize exposures. Owners and managers are encouraged to retest PCB levels in the air to determine whether these practices are reducing the potential for PCB exposures. Should these practices not reduce exposure, caulk and other known sources of PCBs should be removed as soon as practicable.

The following steps have been recommended by US EPA to minimize exposure to potentially contaminated caulk:

- ! Cleaning air ducts
- ! Improving ventilation by opening windows and using or installing exhaust fans where possible
- ! Cleaning frequently to reduce dust and residue inside buildings
- ! Using a wet or damp cloth or mop to clean surfaces
- ! Not sweeping with dry brooms and minimizing the use of dusters in areas

near potential PCB-containing caulk

- ! Using vacuums with high efficiency particulate air filters
- ! Washing hands with soap and water often, particularly before eating and drinking

Midwest Environmental Services can assist you in all phases of PCB testing and removal. Our HAZWOPER trained remediation technicians can perform removal of PCB contaminated caulk as well as sampling and testing. If you are not sure whether your building may be affected, our consulting division can perform an assessment to determine the likelihood of contamination.

Midwest Environmental Services, Inc.
PO Box 218. Brownstown, IN 47220. 812.358.5160 /phone. 812.358.5642 /fax
info@midwestenvironmentalservices.com /email
24 HOUR EMERGENCY RESPONSE: 1.877.999.7745