



Fact Sheet

California Environmental Protection Agency

 **Air Resources Board**

New Air Toxics Regulation for Automotive Cleaning and Degreasing Products

Why is ARB focusing on automotive cleaning and degreasing products?

About 4.5 million aerosol spray cans and spray bottles of automotive cleaning and degreasing products are sold in California each year. These products, which include brake cleaners, carburetor cleaners, engine degreasers, and general purpose degreasers, are used at automotive maintenance and repair shops and at home by do-it-yourself mechanics. Many of these products contain toxic air contaminants. Because automotive maintenance and repair shops are often found near residential neighborhoods and schools, the Air Resources Board (ARB) is concerned about the public being exposed to toxic air contaminants from these products.

What types of toxic air contaminants are emitted from automotive cleaning and degreasing products?

Perchloroethylene (Perc), methylene chloride (MeCl), and trichloroethylene (TCE) are the chlorinated toxic air contaminants of most concern in automotive cleaners and degreasers. Exposure to these compounds may result in both cancer and non-cancer health effects to nearby residents and workers. Non-cancer health effects from one or more of these compounds may include headache, nausea, liver and kidney damage, and cardiac arrhythmia.

What is the ARB doing to reduce public exposure to toxic air contaminants from automotive maintenance and repair activities?

The ARB has adopted a new regulation focusing on pollution prevention that prohibits the manufacture, sale, or use of automotive cleaning and degreasing products if they contain Perc, MeCl, and TCE. This pollution prevention regulation will reduce public exposure to Perc, MeCl, and TCE by over 5 tons per day. Specifically, the regulation requires manufacturers of brake cleaners, carburetor cleaners, engine degreasers, and general purpose degreasers to eliminate the use of Perc, MeCl, TCE in these products by June 30, 2001. In addition, significantly less Perc, MeCl, and TCE will find its way to wastewater treatment plants and hazardous waste disposal sites.

Who is affected by the regulation?

- Manufacturers that make automotive cleaning and degreasing products.
- Automotive maintenance and repair shops that use automotive cleaning and degreasing products to service or repair motor vehicles. Examples of shops subject to the regulation include service stations, fleet operators, general automotive repair shops, and car dealerships.

Alternative Products:

Non-chlorinated automotive cleaning and degreasing products are currently available in the marketplace and are comparable in price. These are suitable and effective for cleaning and degreasing activities. Automotive maintenance and repair shops currently using the regulated products also have the choice of using near-zero emissions water-based brake and parts cleaning units.

For more information

Visit our web site at <http://www.arb.ca.gov/toxics/toxics.htm>. You may also call the ARB's Public Information Office at (916) 322-2990. If you are a person with a disability and desire to obtain this document in an alternative format, please contact the ARB's ADA Coordinator at (916) 323-4916 (voice). Persons with hearing or speech impairments can contact us by using our Telephone Device for the Deaf (TDD) at (916) 324-9531 or (800) 700-8326 for TDD calls outside the Sacramento area.

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see our web site: www.arb.ca.gov.