

Formaldehyde

Why am I being warned about potential exposure to formaldehyde?



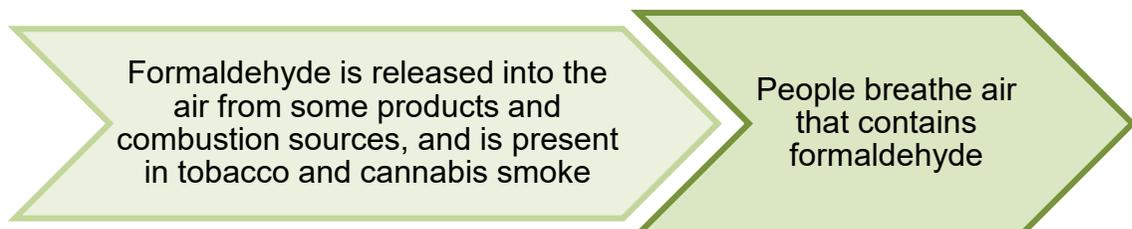
- Formaldehyde (gas) is on the [Proposition 65](#) list because it can cause cancer.
- Exposure to formaldehyde can cause leukemia and cancers of the nose, throat, and sinuses.
- Proposition 65 requires businesses to determine if they must provide a warning about significant exposure to [listed chemicals](#).

What is formaldehyde?

Formaldehyde is a colorless, flammable gas with a strong smell. It is often an ingredient in adhesives used to make building materials and household products.

How does exposure to formaldehyde occur?

- Exposure occurs by breathing air that contains formaldehyde. Sources of formaldehyde include some:
 - ▶ Furniture products made with formaldehyde-containing adhesives, paints, lacquers, and other coatings.
 - ▶ [Composite wood products](#) made with formaldehyde-containing adhesives such as particleboard, plywood, and fiberboard. These adhesives may be used in furniture, cabinets, shelves, doors, and wall and [flooring materials](#).
 - ▶ Building and insulation materials such as foam and fiberglass insulation.
 - ▶ Hair smoothing and straightening products.
 - ▶ Paper products and permanent-press fabrics (such as clothing, linens, upholstery, and draperies).
 - ▶ Combustion byproducts from fuel-burning appliances such as gas stoves, kerosene space heaters, and wood-burning stoves, and from vehicle exhaust.
- Formaldehyde is also present in [tobacco smoke](#) and [cannabis \(marijuana\) smoke](#).
- During pregnancy, formaldehyde can pass from mother to baby.



How can I reduce my exposure to formaldehyde?

- ✓ Try to avoid bringing [products that may release formaldehyde](#) into your home.
- ✓ Choose furniture products that contain little or no formaldehyde, such as those made with solid wood or stainless steel.
- ✓ Look for furniture products with low formaldehyde gas emission labels with the following language:
 - ▶ [TSCA Title VI Compliant](#) and [California Air Resources Board \(CARB\) Phase 2 Compliant](#).
 - ▶ No-added formaldehyde (NAF).
 - ▶ Ultra-low-emitting formaldehyde (ULEF).
- ✓ Air out new furniture products made from composite wood that may release formaldehyde, where possible. At first, leave them in a well-ventilated area to allow any formaldehyde to dissipate.
- ✓ Apply a surface barrier (for example, a formaldehyde-free varnish or latex-based paint) onto furniture, shelves, countertops, cabinets, and laminate flooring that can release formaldehyde.
- ✓ Choose formaldehyde-free insulation materials.
- ✓ Wash new clothes, sheets, and other fabrics that may contain formaldehyde before use.
- ✓ Assure adequate indoor ventilation, and open windows and doors regularly to bring in outdoor air, especially during painting.
- ✓ Use a range hood or exhaust fan when [cooking](#) on a gas range or cooktop, and make sure all gas appliances are properly vented to the outside.
- ✓ Maintain low humidity and temperatures indoors. More formaldehyde is released in hot and damp environments.
- ✓ Keep your fireplace and wood stove in good condition to prevent smoke from getting into your living environment.
- ✓ Assure adequate ventilation inside your vehicle. Set the ventilation system to allow outside air to enter the vehicle.
- ✗ Do not smoke. Do not allow children to breathe tobacco or cannabis (marijuana) smoke.
- ✗ Do not idle engines in vehicles and equipment that use gasoline or diesel fuel.
- ✗ Do not use [hair smoothing and straightening products](#) that contain or release formaldehyde.

For more information:

General Fact Sheets and Resources

- US Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA)
 - ▶ Formaldehyde
<https://www.epa.gov/formaldehyde>

- National Institutes of Health (NIH)
 - ▶ Formaldehyde and Cancer Risk
<https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/causes-prevention/risk/substances/formaldehyde/formaldehyde-fact-sheet>
- California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)
Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA)
 - ▶ Final Report on the Identification of Formaldehyde as a Toxic Air Contaminant
<https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/classic/toxics/id/summary/formald.pdf>
 - ▶ Furniture Products
<https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/fact-sheets/furniture-products>

Formaldehyde in Products

- California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)
California Air Resources Board (CARB)
 - ▶ Formaldehyde
<http://www.arb.ca.gov/research/indoor/formaldehyde.htm>
 - ▶ Composite Wood Products
http://www.arb.ca.gov/toxics/compwood/consumer_faq.pdf
 - ▶ Flooring Made with Composite Wood Products
https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/classic/html/fact_sheets/composite_wood_flooring_faq.pdf
- California Department of Public Health (CDPH)
California Safe Cosmetics Program. Occupational Health Branch
 - ▶ Q&A: Brazilian Blowout & Other Hair Smoothing Salon Treatments
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/DEODC/OHB/CSCP/CDPH%20Document%20Library/BrazilianBlowoutQA.pdf>
- US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
 - ▶ Hair Smoothing Products That Release Formaldehyde When Heated
<https://www.fda.gov/cosmetics/cosmetic-products/hair-smoothing-products-release-formaldehyde-when-heated>
- New York State Department of Health
 - ▶ Consumer Health Alert: Hair Straightening Products and Formaldehyde
<https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/chemicals/formaldehyde/docs/consumer.pdf>

Proposition 65

- California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)
Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA)
 - ▶ Proposition 65: Background
<https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/faq>
 - ▶ Proposition 65: The List of Chemicals
<https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/chemicals>
 - ▶ Proposition 65: Fact Sheets
<https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/fact-sheets>