

BEST PRACTICES FOR THE PAINT MIXING ROOM

CUT SHOP WASTE AND POLLUTION

SAVE MONEY

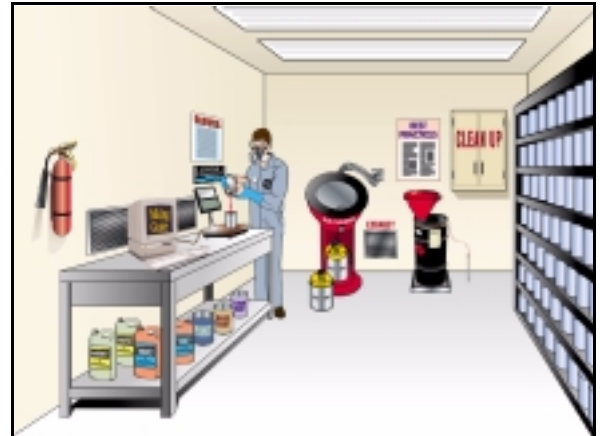
REDUCE HEALTH AND SAFETY HAZARDS

KEEP ALL CONTAINERS COVERED

An open container of paint or solvent contaminates the air and wastes money. By putting a lid on it!—you will keep harmful vapors out of the air that you and your co-workers breathe. You'll also save materials and money by not letting your expensive paints and coatings evaporate away or be ruined by exposure to air.

INSTALL A VENTILATION SYSTEM OR PREFABRICATED MIXING ROOM

Inadequate ventilation, common in many paint mixing rooms, poses a serious health and safety risk. A well-designed ventilation system will pull harmful vapors away from you and significantly improve air quality in the mixing room. To get the most protection from your ventilation, make sure you position vapor-generating materials and equipment in front of or near an exhaust outlet (e.g., install an exhaust hood behind the mixing table). A prefabricated mixing room has built-in ventilation. Prefab units come in a range of sizes and designs for convenient placement in the shop. Be sure to set up equipment such that the ventilation draws vapors away from work stations.



Picture provided courtesy of CCAR-GreenLink®

Remember: all electrical equipment in the paint mixing room (e.g., switches, ventilation fans, lights, telephones) should be approved for Class I, Division 1 (explosive) environments.

WEAR AIR-PURIFYING RESPIRATORS

Vapor-generating materials and equipment pack most paint mixing rooms. A painter in a respirator is much less likely to breathe the harmful vapors in paints and solvents. When working in the mixing room, always use an air-purifying, respirator with organic vapor cartridges. This respirator should provide adequate protection for typical mixing room tasks.

Remember: for a tight-fitting air-purifying respirator to work properly, you must: (1) Make sure it forms a tight seal on your face (a clean shave where the mask touches your face is step one, followed by a “fit test” from a safety professional); and (2) Change the cartridges on a regular schedule, as specified by the manufacturer—once vapors saturate the cartridges, the respirator won't protect you! Your employer should have an implemented filter change schedule as specified in 29 CFR 1910.134(d)(3)(iii).

WEAR CHEMICAL-RESISTANT GLOVES, CLOTHING -- AND EYE PROTECTION

Your skin and eyes also need protection from hazardous paint materials. Many chemicals in coatings and solvents are not only strong irritants, but can pass through your skin and damage your body's internal organs. Be aware of the variety of chemicals you use in the mixing room and choose chemical-resistant gloves and paint suits that offer adequate protection.

For gloves, nitrile or butyl rubber make the grade, latex does not. **Remember:** even a more protective glove has a limited life span, especially if you use it when handling certain strong solvents—so, always follow the manufacturer's recommended change schedule and never use a torn or punctured glove.

