



Introduction

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has finalized a rule regarding methylene chloride, also known as dichloromethane (DCM) under the Toxic Substance Control Act. This rule prohibits manufacturing, processing and distribution of methylene chloride along with most industrial and commercial uses. Laboratories are allowed to continue their use of DCM, contingent on the development and implementation of a Workplace Chemical Protection Program (WCCP) and other requirements.

Summary:

- **EPA Requirements** - 1) initial monitoring by 05/05/25; 2) periodic monitoring every 3 or 6 months or 5 years depending on monitoring results; 3) reduce exposures based on hierarchy of controls; 4) respirator protection for any remaining exposure; and 5) exposure control plan by 10/30/25.
- **What actions are the EPA taking and why?** - After being subject to risk evaluation, the EPA determined that methylene chloride provides an unreasonable risk of injury to health under the current conditions of use. The new rule prohibits the manufacturing, processing and distribution of methylene chloride for all consumer use and for most industrial and commercial use. Those still allowed to use methylene chloride must maintain certain recordkeeping expectations and abide by the requirements listed above.
- **New exposure limits are lower than OSHA limits** - These limits are below the odor threshold, meaning exposure can occur even if you cannot smell the chemical. The de minimis amount of 0.1% has been set by the rule. DCM present in concentrations above 0.1% are covered by this rule.

	OSHA Limits	New EPA Limits
8 hr time weighted average	25 ppm	2 ppm
15 min short term exposure limit	125 ppm	16 ppm
Action Level	12.5 ppm	1 ppm

- **Does this affect me?** - Laboratories are one of the industries allowed to maintain some use of DCM. If you are a PI, laboratory manager or supervisor who oversees work tasks involving methylene chloride, you will need to comply with the new requirements.
- **How do I ensure compliance?** - If your workplace or laboratory involves the use of DCM, please contact the Environmental Health and Safety department for a review of your current chemical hygiene plan, an evaluation of your standard operating procedures, and to schedule a time for air monitoring to be conducted.
- **Contact EHS with questions** - The initial air monitoring must be completed by May 2025. Please contact us with any questions to help us stay compliant and keep our campus safe.