



DOSH Hazard Awareness eBulletin
November 1, 2010

#5HB2010

Attention: Salon stylists and cosmetology schools:

Don't get lost in the hype. Learn the facts about this hazard issue.

Fact 1: Formaldehyde is a regulated chemical linked to serious health effects ranging from respiratory irritation to cancer. The risk to your health increases the more exposure you have and the fewer safety precautions you take.

Fact 2: Results from recent tests show that several hair straightening products contain enough formaldehyde to pose a health risk to stylists applying the product once or more a day.

Fact 3: Some products containing more than .1% formaldehyde do not list formaldehyde (also called formalin or methylene glycol) on their labels nor on the material safety data sheets (MSDSs) that come with the product. Learning about health symptoms linked to formaldehyde exposure can be your best defense.

New information is available to help you find out if this could be a problem in your workplace and help you learn how to stay safe when working with hair-straightening products:

- A two-page [Hazard Alert](#) for salons
- A [News Release](#) from the Oregon OSHA
- A [Technical report](#) covering the history, health effects, and testing relating to use of hair straightening products in Oregon state

The following chemical safety rules apply in Washington state when employees may be exposed to formaldehyde:

- [Formaldehyde](#)
- [Chemical Hazard Communication](#) (when formaldehyde content is more than .1%)

DOSH can help you evaluate this possible hazard. To request a free assistance, contact the consultation manager nearest you at <http://SafetyConsultants.LNI.wa.gov>.

Please share this bulletin with others in your industry and safety networks.

This bulletin was developed by L&I's Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) to alert employers, labor groups, and employees to potential hazards associated with work activities. This is not a rule and creates no new legal obligations. The information provided includes suggested guidance on how to avoid workplace injuries. DOSH recommends you also check the related rules for additional requirements.

Get another copy of this document and find other resources for preventing workplace fatalities, injuries and illnesses on our web site: www.LNI.wa.gov/Safety



Stay safe and working.
New information can help you identify products with formaldehyde and learn about protective measures for stylists.

Photo courtesy of Oregon OSHA