

# Xylene

## Summary:

*Exposure to xylene can occur in the workplace air when using paint, gasoline, paint thinners, and other products that contain it. People who breathe high levels may have dizziness, confusion, and a change in their sense of balance. This substance has been found in at least 658 of 1,430 National Priorities List sites identified by the EPA.*

## Your Right to Know

### Exposure Risks

Xylene affects the brain. Xylene is a fat solvent that causes Central Nervous System dysfunction and destruction of other tissues. High levels from exposure for short periods (14 days or less) or long periods (1 year or more) can cause headaches, lack of muscle coordination, dizziness, confusion, and change in one's sense of balance. Exposure of people to high levels of xylene for short periods can also cause irritation of the skin, eyes, nose and throat; difficulty in breathing; problems with the lungs; delayed reaction time; memory difficulties; stomach discomfort; and possible changes in the liver and kidneys. It can cause unconsciousness and even death at very high levels.

Studies of unborn animals indicate that high concentrations of xylene may cause increased numbers of deaths, and delayed growth and

development. In many instances, these same concentrations also cause damage to the mothers. We do not know if xylene harms the unborn child if the mother is exposed to low levels of xylene during pregnancy..

*Xylene is one of the top 30 chemicals produced in the USA in terms of volume. It is used as a solvent in the printing, rubber, and leather industries. Xylene is also used as a cleaning agent, and a thinner for paint and in varnishes. It is found in small amounts in airplane fuel and gasoline. Xylene is used as a material in the chemical, plastics, and synthetic fiber industries, and as an ingredient in the coating of fabrics and papers. Isomers of xylene are used in the manufacture of polymers, such as plastics.*

### Do You Know Your Xylene Exposure?

*Passive dosimeters are the most convenient way to monitor your environment!*

The *Kem Medical VAPOR-TRAK*<sup>®</sup> 8540 xylene monitor has been validated for the O S H A 8 - h o u r T W A exposure limit of 100 ppm and 150 ppm for a 15-minute STEL.

All VAPOR-TRAK<sup>®</sup> badges are:

- Accurate, with reproducible results
- Easy to Use
- Designed for personal and area monitoring
- Full validation studies available
- Phone Notification of High Results
- Technical Assistance
- Pre-paid return postage and laboratory analysis inclusive

