



QUICK CARD

Hexavalent Chromium Automotive Collision Repair Industry

Employees and employers in the automotive collision repair industry should be aware of the precautions that must be taken when refinishing vehicle parts. Procedures such as sanding, grinding and welding can increase the chances of potential exposure to Hexavalent Chromium also known as Cr(VI). Cr(VI) compounds are widely used in the chemical industry as ingredients and catalysts in pigments, metal plating and chemical synthesis. They have been a part of automotive coating products for years.



Workplace exposure to Cr(VI) may cause:

- Lung cancer in workers who breath airborne Cr(VI);
- Irritation or damage to the nose, throat, and lung if Cr(VI) is inhaled at high levels; and
- Irritation or damage to the eyes and skin if Cr(VI) contacts these organs in high concentrations.

Cr(VI) exposure can be avoided by following proper safety techniques. However, the best way to avoid exposure is to heed all warnings regarding the presence of Cr(VI) and select materials that do not contain Cr(VI).

Minimize Exposure to Cr(VI)

- **Respiratory Protection:** Use of an air-line respirator, rather than an air-purifying fume respirator, will provide the best protection.
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Clothing:** Using the correct PPE coveralls, head coverings, goggles, gloves, and Tyvec suits.
- **Local Exhaust Ventilation:** Using and maintaining proper ventilation in mixing rooms.
- **Housekeeping Measures:** Keeping surfaces free of accumulated Cr(VI), cleaning spills and releases are cleaned promptly using appropriate cleaning methods, disposing of used, and contaminated materials properly.
- **Hygiene Areas and Practices:** Changing rooms and washing facilities reduce Cr(VI) exposure.
- **Medical Surveillance:** All employees that are users of Cr(VI) examined annually.
- **Recordkeeping:** Training and medical records kept on hand for three years.
- **Hazard Communication:** Cr(VI) included in HazCom plan.
- **Sample and Monitor:** Check the breathing air zone for concentration of Cr(VI).
- **Spraying Operations:** Confine spraying to paint booths with approved respirators at all times.



In newer products, levels of Cr(VI) are relatively low, if detectable at all. Shops should check with each product to be sure. A greater risk may exist when dry sanding older vehicles that had higher levels of the Cr(VI) in their original coatings.

For more information on this subject, refer to the Safety and Health Information Bulletin “Hexavalent Chromium” at:

<http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/hexavalentchromium/index.html>