

Wood Dust

Why am I being warned about potential exposure to wood dust?



- Wood dust is on the [Proposition 65](#) list because it can cause cancer.
- Exposure to wood dust in significant amounts on a recurring basis can cause cancers of the nose, throat, and sinuses.
- Proposition 65 requires businesses to determine if they must provide a warning about significant exposure to [listed chemicals](#).

What is wood dust?

- Wood dust is generated when machines or tools are used to cut or shape timber and other wood materials. Activities like chipping, sawing, drilling, sanding, or woodturning create wood dust.

How does exposure to wood dust occur?

- Cutting, shaping, and sanding wood releases wood dust into the air, where it can be inhaled. Wood dust also settles onto tables, floors, and other surfaces. When disturbed, it can become airborne again, and can be inhaled. Under dry conditions, small amounts of wood dust can be released into the air from handling materials such as wood chip mulch and compost that contain wood dust. Regular exposure to significant amounts of wood dust are of concern.



How can I reduce my exposure to wood dust?

- ✓ Work outside, if possible, when you are sanding or creating fine wood dust. Wear a dust mask that fits snugly and comfortably.
- ✓ If you often work with wood, are a hobbyist, or do home improvement projects with wood:
 - ▶ Consider installing a dust-collection or air-filtration system in your indoor work space to help capture and remove wood dust at the source.
 - ▶ Consider using a saw hood or a sanding table that has suction to pull dust particles downward to prevent inhalation, especially if you are sanding wood that is glued, laminated, or has synthetic finishes.
- ✗ Do not brooms, blowers, fans, or compressed air to move the dust.
 - ▶ Vacuum with a high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter, or use a shop vacuum cleaner with a HEPA filter, if possible.
 - ▶ Use wet clean-up methods, such as removing dust with wet rags.
 - ▶ Carefully bag and seal wood dust from vacuum or other dust extraction systems.
- ✓ Change out of clothes that contain wood dust before entering your home, car, or other areas.

For more information:

General Fact Sheets and Resources

- US Department of Labor (DOL)
Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
 - ▶ Health Hazards > Wood Products
<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/sawmills/dust.html>
 - ▶ Wood Dust
<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/wooddust/evaluation.html>
- California Department of Public Health (CDPH)
 - ▶ Wood Dust and Work-related Asthma
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/DEODC/OHB/WRAPP/CDPH%20Document%20Library/WoodDust-eng.pdf>
- Oregon Institute of Occupational Health Services (Oregon OSHA)
 - ▶ Wood Dust Fact Sheet
<http://osha.oregon.gov/OSHAPubs/factsheets/fs17.pdf>
- Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS)
 - ▶ Wood Dust - Health Effects
https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/chemicals/wood_dust.html

Scientific Information on Wood Dust

- California Department of Industrial Relations (DIR)
 - ▶ Wood Dusts
<https://www.dir.ca.gov/oshsb/documents/Airborne-Contaminants-Wood-Dust-and-Western-Red-Cedar-1-TLV-2005.pdf>

- US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
National Toxicology Program (NTP)
 - ▶ Wood Dust, Report on Carcinogens, Fourteenth Edition
<https://ntp.niehs.nih.gov/ntp/roc/content/profiles/wooddust.pdf>
- World Health Organization (WHO)
International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC)
 - ▶ IARC Monographs on the Evaluation of Carcinogenic Risks to Humans, vol. 100C (2012). "Wood Dust" in Arsenic, Metals, Fibers, and Dusts, pages 407-465.
<https://publications.iarc.fr/120>

Proposition 65

- California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)
Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA)
 - ▶ Proposition 65: Background
<https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/faq>
 - ▶ Proposition 65: The List of Chemicals
<https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/chemicals>
 - ▶ Proposition 65: Fact Sheets
<https://www.p65warnings.ca.gov/fact-sheets>