

Formaldehyde Facts

Formaldehyde is one of the most extensively studied chemicals in use today. Its health and safety properties have been researched in-depth, and there is reassuring evidence that current standards and safeguards are protective.

Many people are unaware that formaldehyde is natural and exists all around us. It can be found in every living system from plants to animals to humans. Only a relatively small amount results from man-made formaldehyde production, or from wood products' emissions. Humans, along with plants and animals, actually produce formaldehyde as a normal part of metabolism; in fact, the average person generates about 1.5 ounces a day. Formaldehyde metabolizes quickly and breaks down readily in both the body and in the atmosphere.

All wood species naturally contain and emit small amounts of formaldehyde, even before they are processed or treated in any way. Today, as a result of advances in resin and finish technology, manufactured wood products emit extremely low amounts of formaldehyde.

It is important for us to let you know that our cabinets have not had formaldehyde levels tested as an assembled unit. There is really no way we can give an exact percentage of how much formaldehyde exists in our finished product due to the fact that it is continually "flashing" or "evaporating" off the product. Well documented testing has revealed that formaldehyde dissipation happens at a rate that reduces exponentially over time; it reduces quickly at first as the finish and adhesives cure, and diminishes over time to background levels – just how quickly this process takes depends on factors such as temperature, humidity, and air flow.

Current indoor air quality studies have determined that, on average, only low levels of formaldehyde are present in the typical new home; even so, the presence of formaldehyde at higher than normal exposure levels can be irritating to the eyes, nose and throat. This irritation is temporary and reversible. We recommend that for consumers who are sensitive to this, purchased cabinets should be unpackaged and temporarily stored in a well ventilated area allowing them to off-gas until there is no longer an odor.

The California Air Regulatory Board (CARB) initiated its Air Toxics Control Measure (ATCM) which provides a 12/31/10 deadline for full implementation. California's ATCM establishes the country's most stringent formaldehyde emissions limits for composite wood products. Showplace is acting in compliance with the standards set by the state of California and will produce cabinets that comply with the ATCM deadline regardless of whether they are shipped to California or any other destination.