



The Chemical Company

BASF Re-Occupancy Times for Interior Building Spray Applications

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Introduction

The application of spray foam insulation is done through special high pressure spray application equipment, Low pressure application units or single component foams. This document will discuss two part foams field process using high pressure application equipment. When the combination of liquid part A compound and liquid B compound is done to produce either closed cell or open cell spray foam insulation there are potential health hazards during the application. OSHA and other government agencies have established protection requirements for all workers that can be exposed to the chemicals during the spray application. Only trained and properly protected workers are allowed in the spray application areas during the spraying and for a period after the spraying has stopped.

Requirements

The spray area should be posted with keep out WARNING signs before and after spraying. Workers only that are trained and have the necessary personal protection equipment are allowed inside the spray area. All others must be kept out as well as pets. Ventilation of the spray area is to be done incorporating the guidance documents: "Ventilation Guidance for Spray Polyurethane Foam Application," published by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), online at www.epa.gov/dfe/pubs/projects/spf/ventilation-guidance.html and "Good Practices – Engineering Controls and Ventilation," published by the American Chemistry Council's Center for the Polyurethanes Industry, available online at: www.spraypolyurethane.org/GoodPractices#EngineeringControls

The following general requirements must also be followed, Code of Federal Regulations Title 29 CFR §1926.20 Safety and Health Regulations for Construction: General Safety and Health Provisions available online at www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=STANDARDS&p_id=10606

The applicators and building owners should visit www.spraypolyurethane.org and also www.spf.basf.com for up to date information about spray polyurethane foam construction applications before starting projects.

Industry Established Re Occupancy Times

The Spray Foam Industry and government agencies have worked together to establish general guidelines for re occupancy. These can be found at www.spraypolyurethane.org. The general statement of 24 hours for re occupancy times for interior building applications is the general rule BASF suggests for two part high pressure spray.

“Evaluation reports for many types of building products, including SPF insulation, often include the suggested reoccupancy time, which is variable: for an interior application using two-component high-pressure SPF, some manufacturers recommend 24 hours before reoccupancy, and for an interior two-component, low-pressure SPF kit application, some manufacturers recommend a one hour reoccupancy time. Consult the product manufacturer to determine the recommended reoccupancy time for the particular job and SPF in use.

Note: “Exterior applications where the spray application is done to a roof top application or exterior walls and where there is wide open air spaces; the risk control is done by closing off all air intake areas to a building interior,(windows, doors, warning signs and HVAC intake vents). Roof or exterior applications will generally have plenty of ventilation with natural wind as well as massive volumes of space to dissipate the concentration of materials. Therefore the controls used for interior applications are not generally required, such as added ventilation. The elastomeric roof coatings vary in risks and must be assessed and the risks evaluated on a job by job and material specific basis by the spray foam applicator company.

BASF Re occupancy Research

BASF, Air Products and Honeywell have conducted proprietary studies for indoor air quality measurements on spray foam applications to retrofit attics. Robert, William, James Andersen, Richard Wood, and Mary Bogdan. “Ventilation and Re-Occupancy of a Residential Home Sprayed with High Pressure Polyurethane Foam.” Presented at the CPI Technical Conference, September 2012

This study of three houses where the attic was sealed and ventilated during the spray application has resulted in no chemicals detected within the house at levels greater than those currently assigned levels by government agencies and private chemical manufactures’ Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) or Safety Data Sheets (SDS).

This particular application process indicates 2 hours after spraying has stopped and ventilation continued that re-occupancy can occur within the homes. The spray foam was done above the sheetrock in non inhabited attic spaces.

BASF continues field monitoring testing as well as supports continued research being done by the American Chemistry Council/Center for the Polyurethane Industries of which we are an active member.

Summary

This information has been provided for use by our spray foam applicators and distributors use. It may also be used to inform end customers who have contracted to have spray foam produced by spray foam applicators to their buildings. It is offered in good faith and believed to present the risks and best industry practices to manage them. Since each field application is different the responsibility rests with spray foam applicators to assess the job risks and control them per the OSHA and others requirements. Technical Questions can be directed to BASF Technical Services 800-706-0712.