



Volatile Organic Compounds

How do they affect us?

Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) are commonly found in paints, as they help to aid drying times as well as control viscosity and flow.

But high concentrations of VOCs pollute the air we breathe and are linked to various health issues, including headaches, sore eyes, respiratory complaints and the possible impairment of our immune systems.

VOCs are commonly found in the following products:

- Carpets, laminate flooring and flooring adhesives.
- Vinyl wallpapers.
- Furniture polish, parquet wax.
- Paints, plasters and interior finishes.

Volatile Organic Compounds

Meeting the new regulations



EU limit value for this product (cat. A/a):
75g/l (2007) / 30g/l (2010).
This product contains max. 30g/l VOC tinted/white contains max 0.5g/l VOC

How are products labelled for VOC content?

Manufacturers are legally required to provide clearly communicated labelling on products highlighting VOC content. Labelling currently varies between paint manufacturers. Many use the following 5-tier scale:

- Minimal VOC content 0-0.29%
- Low VOC content 0.30-7.99%
- Medium VOC content 8-24.99%
- High VOC content 25-50%
- Very high VOC content 50% and above

How are VOCs measured in products?

In the UK, the VOC quantity is measured in accordance with ISO 11890. This measures VOC content above 0.1%.

How does Sto measure its products?

Sto products are tested by the TÜV independent testing agency. The TÜV has set the highest standard in Europe; for broadwall paints, the maximum VOC content to be considered VOC free is less than 100 parts per million - less than 0.01%.

All Sto interior primers, paints and plasters already meet or exceed this tougher standard. By the end of 2007, all water-based Sto facade and interior products will meet the required standard.

How are VOCs classified?

VOC: Any organic compound with an initial boiling point of 250°C or under

SVOC: Any organic compound with an initial boiling point over 250°C

Decopaint & European VOC Regulations 2007

According to the new European VOC regulations, by 2010 any water based product with VOC content cannot exceed more than 30g per litre of the total volume. Such products would be labelled as Low VOC content (0.3-7.99%). As this tier is so broad, and product densities vary, to be guaranteed you are meeting the regulations Sto advises anyone involved in the specification of products to select those within the Minimal VOC content (0.00-0.29%) range.

- The new regulations came into effect in January 2007 and will be tightened further in 2010.
- They aim to minimise, monitor and control the harmful effects of VOC content in products.
- All EU member states have signed up to the regulations, and are committed to reduce VOC content in products to 72% of the year 2000 levels by 2010.

By 2010 all adhesives, fillers, paints, primers and decorative materials manufactured in Europe are to be free of solvents and plasticisers, in-line with EU directive 2004/42/EC.

Environmental protection

VOCs are an important issue that we take very seriously. Sto is leading the way with a wide range of VOC free products.

Our continuing research and development into environmentally safe products means that you can be safe in the knowledge that our products meet current environmental safeguards.

Sto acts in accordance with our guiding principle, "Building with conscience", which entails preserving buildings and respecting the interests of people and nature at all times.

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