

# Trump's Methylene Chloride Rule Leaves Workers Exposed to Deadly Chemical

EPA abandons proposed ban on commercial uses of paint-stripping chemical linked to dozens of workers' deaths

By [Earth Justice](#)

Global Research, March 17, 2019

[Earthjustice](#) 15 March 2019

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Science and Medicine](#)

*Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [unveiled a rule](#) that leaves workers across the United States exposed to methylene chloride, a lethal chemical used in paint strippers that has already caused dozens of worker deaths. Breaking EPA's repeated promises to ban commercial and consumer uses of methylene chloride paint strippers, the Trump administration instead finalized a ban solely on consumer uses, opening a loophole that leaves thousands of workers at risk of illness and death.*

"We will not allow this administration to once again attack our community, because that is what this rule does, it leaves workers blatantly exposed to deadly chemicals," said Hector Sanchez Barba, LCLAA Executive Director. "Latino and immigrant workers are overly represented in jobs that require exposure to deadly working conditions, including paint strippers. LCLAA is committed to ensuring that these women and men are granted the same protections as workers in other industries. Methylene chloride must be fully banned."

In January 2017, EPA acknowledged those risks and proposed a ban on commercial and consumer uses of methylene chloride paint strippers. Since then, at least four people — including two workers — have died from methylene chloride exposure. However, despite repeated promises to finalize that proposal, the Trump administration reversed course and excluded workers from its final methylene chloride rule.

"Workers will continue to die because the Trump administration can't bring itself to ban even the most toxic chemicals on the market. EPA's decision to leave workers exposed to lethal paint strippers is unconscionable and unlawful," said Jonathan Kalmuss-Katz, a staff attorney at Earthjustice. "The methylene chloride rule sends a clear message to workers that their lives matter less than chemical industry profits."

Acute exposure to methylene chloride can cause asphyxiation, heart failure, even sudden death, while long-term exposure increases risks of cancer, liver disease, and other serious health effects. Last month, LCLAA, represented by Earthjustice, sued EPA over its failure to regulate the chemical's unreasonable risks to workers, consumers, and bystanders, as required by the Toxic Substances Control Act.

The methylene chloride lawsuit filed by LCLAA, represented by Earthjustice, and the Natural

Resources Defense Council is currently pending in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York.

\*

Note to readers: please click the share buttons below. Forward this article to your email lists. Crosspost on your blog site, internet forums. etc.

*Featured image is from American Chemical Society*

The original source of this article is [Earthjustice](#)  
Copyright © [Earth Justice](#), [Earthjustice](#), 2019

---

**[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)**

**[Become a Member of Global Research](#)**

Articles by: [Earth Justice](#)

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)  
[www.globalresearch.ca](http://www.globalresearch.ca) contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)