

Workers' Exposure to Formaldehyde Gas Results in \$50,000 Fine



A worker was in the process of purging an injection molding machine of one type of plastic for another plastic that required a higher temperature to melt. The MSDS for the first type of plastic notes that if it's over-heated, it'll release formaldehyde gas. The MSDS also recommends that workers involved in processing the plastic use PPE and that ventilation be provided to control employee exposure to dust or process vapors. After the worker was done with the purging procedure, the machine was set to process the second plastic and the temperature was raised. But the purging process hadn't fully purged all of the first plastic, which began to degrade and off-gas formaldehyde. As a result, six workers suffered adverse health effects, including itchy and watery eyes, and sore throats. The manufacturer pleaded guilty to failing to provide local ventilation in the area where the plastic was being processed and was fined \$50,000 [*Ultra Manufacturing Ltd.*, Govt. News Release, June 25, 2015].