

# Nail Salon Hazardous Waste



The Kentucky Environmental Compliance Assistance Program (ECAP) is issuing this alert to inform the nail salon industry of potential environmental responsibilities relating to methyl methacrylate (MMA) usage and disposal. This alert is focused on compliance with Kentucky hazardous waste requirements.

## Alert Details

### **Methyl Methacrylate is an Illegal Nail Salon Product in the State of Kentucky**

It is illegal for nail salons to apply methyl methacrylate (MMA) to customer's nails due to carious nail deformities caused not by the toxicity of the chemical, but from the physical nature of the chemical once it hardens. If salon inspectors discover this material on the premises, it will be considered an illegal product subject to fine and immediate disposal.

### **MMA is a Hazardous Waste**

Unused MMA, if disposed, is subject to hazardous waste regulations as created from the Resources and Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) of 1976. Within the RCRA regulations, relief is provided for businesses that generate or dispose of less than 220 pounds of hazardous waste in a month. Assuming a salon generates less than 220 pounds of hazardous waste in a month, the salon is exempt from registering as a hazardous waste generator. This means that the salon is not subject to manifesting hazardous waste, but remains responsible to ensure that the hazardous waste has been properly disposed.



## Proper Disposal of MMA

How do you properly dispose of MMA? Allowing the MMA to polymerize by adding the hardener or initiator to the liquid MMA is the easiest and least expensive way to begin the disposal process. Once the MMA and hardener/initiator form a solid material may be disposed of by a local solid waste disposal service. The hardener/initiator may be labeled as acrylic powder or something similar. It likely was included with the MMA when purchased. It is the same material used to get the MMA to harden onto the nail.

## **What is an Environmental Compliance Alert?**

The Environmental Compliance Alert is published by the Kentucky Environmental Compliance Assistance Program. Its purpose is to proactively raise awareness about compliance issues affecting a specific

sector. The alert is intended to stimulate action, encourage facilities to evaluate their environmental practices and facilitate the identification and correction of compliance problems.

### *Who Should Read this Alert?*

*Nail Technicians*

*Salon Owners*

*Salon Patrons*

## **Proper Disposal of MMA**

Treating Hazardous Waste to make it suitable to be thrown in the trash, requires a Treatment-On-Site authorization in Kentucky. Contact the Division of Waste Management to obtain authorization and then the waste may be treated. To begin this process, place the MMA and hardener in a container large enough to hold the MMA and hardener while leaving some head space. Place a lid over the container to contain vapors. Placing the lid over the container will reduce fugitive air emissions. Since the lid may not contain all vapors, this procedure should be conducted outside or in a well-ventilated area.

Do not dispose of MMA by simply allowing it to volatilize to air. This may create an **explosive environment if conducted indoors** or produce an overly negative impact to air quality if conducted outside.

**Do not pour the MMA down the drain or toilet.** This may also create an explosive environment within the business; plumbing or immediate sewer. It is also against the law to dispose of hazardous substances through the business' plumbing without the approval or consent of the local wastewater treatment provider.

**Do not dump MMA on to the ground, ditch or stream.** This would be illegal disposal of the material negatively impacting air, soil, groundwater and surface water.

### **Health Concerns About MMA**

- Severe skin irritant Allergic reactions are common
- Use of MMA can weaken the nail and damage the nail bed
- Respiratory and eye irritant

## **Additional Contacts**

### **Division of Waste Management**

<https://eec.ky.gov/Environmental-Protection/Waste>

[502-564-6719](tel:502-564-6719)

### **Kentucky Board of Cosmetology**

[kbc.ky.gov](http://kbc.ky.gov)

[502-564-4262](tel:502-564-4262)

The information in this document is offered only as general guidance. It is not a substitute for reading and understanding Kentucky's statutes and regulations governing the applicability and issuance of environmental permits. Specific requirements may vary with location. ECAP is not authorized to relieve any person from any requirement of federal regulations or Kentucky law through this document.

