**Dichloromethane: Frequently Asked Questions**

**What is the law on the use of Dichloromethane based products?**
A ban was placed on the market of dichloromethane (DCM)-based paint strippers for use by the general public after 6 December 2011 by the European Union on 3 June 2009. It became a Commission Regulation formally amending REACH (Commission Regulation (EU) No. 276/2010). In 2014 the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) produced the REACH Enforcement (Amendment) Regulations 2014 (SI 2014/2882). The Regulations amend the REACH Enforcement Regulations 2008 (SI 2008/2852) to allow the supply and professional use in the UK of paint strippers based on the solvent dichloromethane (DCM) by introducing necessary training requirements and a mandatory HSE certificate of competence for professional users. Copies of the Regulations, explanatory memorandum and impact assessment are available at www.legislation.gov.uk.

**Can I purchase Dichloromethane based products?**
Professionals are able to purchase and use dichloromethane based products only after successfully completing the HSE assessment and receiving a certificate of competence with a unique licence number.

**Is there a difference between paint stripping and adhesive disintegration under current legislation?** The use of dichloromethane based products is restricted regardless of the type of material being removed from an object.

**Are there alternatives to dichloromethane based products for the removal of epoxy resins and other adhesives?** Yes. For each project tests should be carried out to identify the safest method of removing an unwanted coating or adhesive. Methods which are safe for both the practitioner and the object should be employed. Consider using mechanical cleaning and less hazardous solvents such as water, acetone, industrially denatured alcohol and benzyl alcohol-based products first.

**Where can I receive the training and HSE competence assessment?**
Targeted training for conservators working with DCM provided by professionals also working in the heritage sector is likely to be best. Training has been provided by conservators working in national museums in the past. Training is offered by commercial companies, some of which are online, care should be taken to ensure that training is accompanied by an HSE assessment and a certificate with a license number on completion.

**Is it safe to use dichloromethane based products?**
Dichloromethane is a hazardous material which can be used safely by competent professionals if the correct procedures are put in place. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) and Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) risk assessments for all hazardous materials at work should be reviewed regularly to ensure safety.

*These questions have been answered to the best of my ability and current understanding of the situation, this is not an official statement from Icon.*

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