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### Paper Information

#### Occupational exposure to volatile organic compounds in the Portuguese printing industry

**Author(s):** S. Viegas

#### Abstract:

In the printing industry, volatile organic compounds main sources are the uses of organic solvents, fountain solutions and cleaning agents. Nowadays, one circumstance which might confuse the exposure reality is that the majority of solvents which are often used have a faint odour.

Therefore, the conditions at offset printing in regard to solvent exposure may seem acceptable to workers.

Fortunately, general ventilation and local exhaust systems have also become more common, and new printing machines, often with automatic cleaning, have entered the market. The health effects of volatile organic solvents are dependent on the chemicals involved but, normally, are associated with affecting the nervous system, the liver and also the kidneys. The purpose of this study was to document the conditions regarding exposure to volatile organic compounds in an offset printing unit and to permit identify task with higher exposure and with priority for preventive measures application. Exposure assessment was done before and after installation of general ventilation and local exhaust equipments and during printing and cleaning procedure.

It was use portable VOCs measurement equipment with real-time measurements (MultiRAE, RAE Systems model) that allowed identify task with higher exposure. The need and appropriateness of ventilation introduction is measured by the significant statistically difference ( $p < .001$ ) in the concentration results before ...

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