



Volatile Organic Compounds

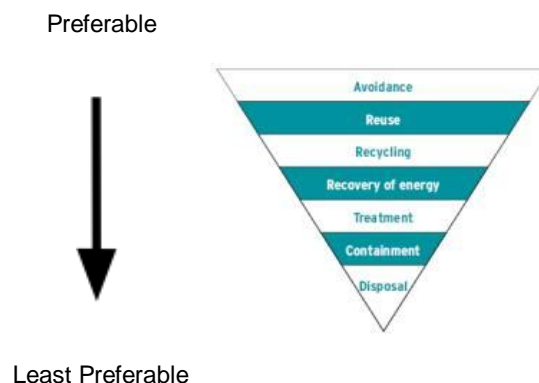
Within the automotive industry, volatile organic compounds (VOCs) are generally hydrocarbons used as solvents for parts washing or as a by-product of combustion. VOCs are recognised by their tendency to evaporate into the atmosphere easily, usually with a distinctive odour. Emissions to air must be managed in accordance with the provisions of the *State Environment Protection Policy (Air Quality Management)*.

Some VOCs containing class 2 or class 3 indicators are very harmful to both people and the environment and may cause respiratory problems, photochemical smog or depletion to the ozone layer. Businesses that generate VOC emissions are responsible for identifying individual VOCs, assessing their potential hazards and implementing appropriate controls.

Managing VOCs

Emissions of VOCs must be managed in order to reduce harmful effects. The *State Environment Protection Policy (Air Quality Management)* requires that emissions of wastes to air must be managed in accordance with the principles of the waste management hierarchy below.

Waste Management Hierarchy:



Best practice (eco-efficient processes) must also be sought after and applied to all stages of a process that may lead to the emissions of waste. Class 3 indicators (the most harmful) must be reduced to the maximum extent achievable.

Environmental Guidelines



Developing a Management Plan

- Apply for or review any EPA emissions licenses to ensure you comply with current requirements.
- Create a record of your review and assessment.
- Review the management of your VOCs at least annually.

The *State Environment Protection Policy (Air Quality Management)* also sets out the ways that your business can manage VOCs. This is a four step process.

Step 1: Identify the individual compounds of interest.

Step 2: Quantify these compounds of interest.

Step 3: Do an environmental assessment of the compounds of interest to assess their risk of impact on human health and the environment.

Step 4: Continue to manage those VOCs you identified.

Please Note

Refer to the *State Environment Protection Policy (Air Quality Management)* for more detailed information on this management process. This can be accessed via the Environment Protection Authority website.

Further Information



Environment Protection Authority Victoria
Phone: (03) 9695 2722
www.epa.vic.gov.au

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Note: This Good Practice Guideline is not a complete statement of law relevant to this topic. Further legal advice must be sought if complete information is required.