



## Facts about Air Quality Rules Affecting Print Shops

If you operate a printing press, federal and state environmental regulations intended to help keep our air clean may affect your business. As a result, many small businesses are required to obtain air emission permits from the Minnesota Pollution control Agency (MPCA). These permits help you make sure your business is complying with all state and federal air quality regulations that apply to it. If your print shop needs a permit and you haven't already applied, you must apply for one as soon as possible.

### Why would a print shop need a permit?

Many inks, fountain solutions, press washes and solvents contain volatile organic compounds, or VOCs, which are regulated because they contribute to the formation of smog. Inks, fountain solutions, press washes and solvents may also contain hazardous air pollutants, or HAPs. HAPs are regulated because they have the potential to cause health problems and environmental contamination at very low concentrations. These two groups of chemicals are the most common materials that would require a print shop to obtain an air emission permit.

### Many small shops will not need a permit.

If you use less than 200 gallons of VOCs per year (including HAP-containing VOCs), and your only sources of air pollution are from using materials that contain VOCs, you do not

If your shop needs some type of air emissions permit, you may be able to make the permitting process easier by reducing the amount of VOC-containing materials you use.

Reducing your VOC use to below certain limits can allow your shop to qualify for permits that require less work on your part. Reductions can be made by changing your operations or switching to materials that contain smaller amounts of VOCs.

Information on ways to reduce your VOC use can be found through trade journals, trade associations, vendors and the Minnesota Technical Assistance Program (MnTAP). For more information about the services available through MnTAP, call (612) 624-1300.

need to apply for an air emissions permit.

To determine how many gallons of VOCs your shop uses each year, see if the materials you use at your shop contain VOCs by checking your Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs). If your materials do contain any VOCs, you will have to calculate whether or not you need an air emissions permit.

In most cases, all the information you need to determine how many gallons per year of VOCs you use at your shop can be found on your MSDSs. You can figure this out by doing the following calculation:

$$\begin{aligned} & (\% \text{ VOC by volume}) \times \\ & (\text{gallons/year purchased or used}) = \\ & \text{gallons/year of VOC purchased or used} \end{aligned}$$

### Pollution Prevention Can Pay

Do this calculation for all of your materials that contain VOCs and add up the totals. If the total is less than 200 gallons of VOCs per year, you will not have to apply for a permit. Make sure to keep monthly records of your VOC purchase or use to show that you do not need a permit.

If you think that at any time your shop will purchase or use more than 200 gallons per year of VOCs, you may need to apply for an air emissions permit.

## Applying for your permit

If your shop does need a permit, there are several different ways to apply for one. In Minnesota, many printers can comply with federal and state permitting regulations by applying for a simplified permit called a “Registration Permit.” There are three different ways for printers to apply for this type of permit.

### Option B Registration Permit

Print shops whose only sources of air pollution are from materials that contain VOCs can apply for this type of permit. You can apply for one of these permits if you purchase or use less than 2,000 gallons of any VOC-containing material in a 12-month period and you have no other sources of air pollution. For an Option B permit, you don’t need to calculate the exact amount of VOCs your shop uses.

All you need to do is check to see if the materials you use contain any amount of VOCs, add up the number of gallons you purchased or used in the previous twelve months, and report the total to the MPCA on the Registration Permit application forms.

If you think it will be difficult to stay below the 2,000 gallons per year limit, or if you expect your business to grow substantially, Option B may not be the right choice for your shop; instead, consider applying for either an Option C or an Option D Registration Permit.

### Option C and Option D Registration Permits

As long as the amount of air pollution from your shop is below certain levels, you can apply for either an Option C or an Option D Registration Permit. Applying for these types of permits is a little more difficult than applying for an Option B Registration Permit, but still fairly simple.

Option C permits are for print shops that also operate generators and some types of large furnaces or boilers. The use of kerosene, natural gas or propane space heaters produces insignificant amounts of emissions and do not require emission calculations.

Option D is for larger shops and requires you to calculate the actual amount of air pollution your facility emits. Still, you should be able to do the calculations using the information from your MSDSs.

If you need a permit and you think you can apply for a Registration Permit, call the MPCA at one of the numbers listed below and ask for a copy of the Registration Permit Handbook. The Handbook describes the requirements for all of the Registration Permit options.

### Larger Print Shops

Some large printing operations may not qualify for any type of simplified permit and will have to apply for the standard air quality permit required of larger sources of air pollution. If you do not qualify for a Registration Permit, call the MPCA for further information.

For additional permitting information, contact the Permit Technical Advisor at (651)282-5844 or (800)646-6247.

If you are a small business (fewer than 100 employees) and need help understanding the air permitting regulations or filling out an application, please call the Small Business Assistance Program at (651)282-6143 or (800)657-3938.

