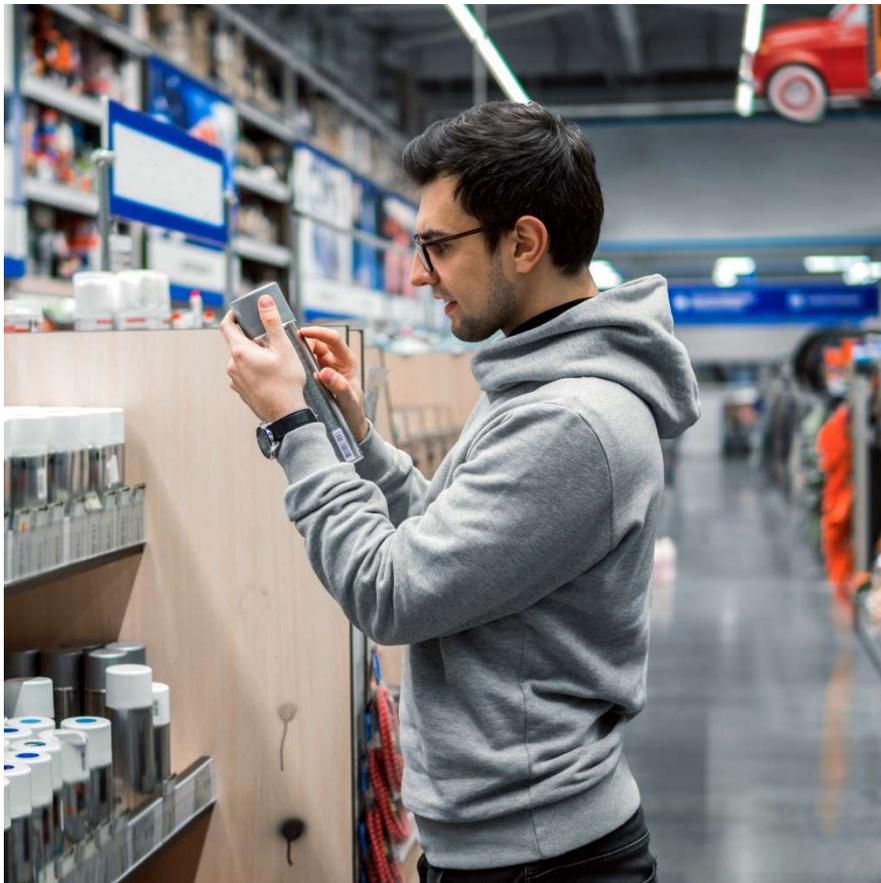


# **AEROSOL PAINT CAN SAFETY IN THE HOME AND AT WORK**



**KEEP AWAY FROM CHILDREN**

**Aerosol Spray Paint products are dangerous if used or stored improperly.**

**ALWAYS READ THE SAFETY DATA SHEET PRIOR TO USE**

# AEROSOL PAINT CAN SAFETY

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# AEROSOL PAINT CAN SAFETY

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## 1 Introduction

This document has been written to provide information on the safe use, storage and disposal of Aerosol spray paint cans in the home and at work.

- Aerosol products have been used in the home and by consumers for over 60 years. As with most consumer products, **if aerosols are used and stored, in accordance with label instructions, they are completely safe** and offer many benefits.
- Dulux, in line with the aerosol industry supports efforts to draw the public's attention to the safe use and storage of aerosol products. On pack (label) consumer safety advice is part of the industry-supported Australian (Aerosol) Standard, AS2278.
- The safety record of aerosols is excellent because of the great care the industry takes in their design, production and testing.
- Manufacturers are required by law to test all aerosols at elevated temperatures and under extreme pressures, during production, to ensure they can withstand some unexpected conditions.
- By law, aerosol product labels must guide consumers in the safe use and storage of aerosols. As with all products, it is important to follow label instructions.
- As a result, there are **very few** aerosol accidents and these are **rarely serious**. Serious accidents are usually caused by someone deliberately disregarding label instructions or misusing products, e.g. throwing a can on a fire, exposing the can to excessive heat, using flammable products near ignition sources, impact damaging a can.
- **All Dulux aerosol paints contain gases and liquids that may be flammable if placed on a fire or near a heat source. Aerosols also contain contents under pressure.** This pressure in the can increases rapidly with heat and may cause the can to burst. It is important to remember **NEVER** to leave an Aerosol Spray Paint Can inside a car or other enclosed vehicle. Vehicle interiors can rapidly heat up even on cloudy days. At all times aerosol paints must be protected from prolonged exposure to direct sunlight – even on cold days.



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### 2 Aerosol Spray Paint Cans and Storage.

Aerosol paint cans are made from tinplated steel which will corrode if the surface coating is damaged or exposed to moisture and/or corrosive substances.

- Aerosol paint cans **MUST** be stored in a cool, dry place away from corrosive chemicals.
- Moist conditions are common in a garage, an external shed, or in a laundry area, bathroom area or kitchen area where water and condensation are present. Take care to **avoid moist conditions** when storing in these locations.
- Corrosive chemicals are often stored in the same locations. Aerosol cans must be stored well away from corrosive chemicals. (e.g. pool chemicals, drain cleaners, bleach, toilet and bathroom cleaners, powdered and pellet form kitchen and laundry detergents, floor cleaning compounds, acidic and alkali materials, etc.)
- **NEVER** store aerosol spray paint in areas where welding, or other hot work is being conducted.
- **NEVER** store aerosol spray paint in direct sunlight



### 3 Aerosol Spray Paint Cans and Heat

- Aerosols **MUST** be protected from heat.
- You must **never keep aerosols inside cars - not even in the boot** - because temperatures can rise quickly even on cool, cloudy days to levels that exceed the can design limits. Aerosol Spray Paint cans have been known to explode when left in cars.
- Aerosols must not be left outdoors in the sun, on windowsills, or near barbeques or other exposed conditions.
- Aerosols must not be left, or used, near a heater, oven, cooktop, pilot light, welding equipment, grinding equipment, incandescent lighting, other sparking equipment or tools etc.) which might expose them to high temperatures or sources of ignition.
- Aerosols must not be pierced or burnt, even when empty. This is because there is always some pressure, and possibly some product, left in the can.
- Never put aerosols into a fire, even when seemingly empty, because they will explode and may cause injury.
- Do not spray an aerosol on or near a naked flame, fire or source of ignition (like a candle, embers, pilot light, incandescent light bulb, sparking electrical motors and equipment etc.).
- Do not place any aerosol in hot water to increase the internal pressure in order to enhance the spray. Aerosol Spray Paint cans have been known to explode when placed in hot water.
- Do not smoke when using an aerosol or immediately afterwards. Ensure that **ALL** gas and solvent vapours have left the area before smoking.

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- Aerosols **MUST NOT** be allowed to freeze in cold weather.

### 4 Aerosol Spray Paint Cans and Impact

- **NEVER** strike an aerosol can against another hard surface or object. Not, even if the can appears to be empty (**ESPECIALLY**, do not strike the can to start the mixing ball moving no matter what the instruction on the can may indicate)
- All Aerosol Spray Paints (except clear coatings) suffer from settling of pigments to the bottom of the can in storage. It is when this pigment is not properly mixed that blockages of valves occurs. That is why shaking the cans is required – to mix in this pigment.
- If you are unable to cause the mixing ball, inside the can, to start rattling within 30 seconds of shaking, return the can to the place of purchase for a refund. (**DO NOT** strike the can to start the mixing ball moving)
- **NEVER** compress a can by stamping on it, placing it in a vice, running over it with a car etc.
- Aerosol paint cans are made with two mechanical seams at the top, and one at the bottom of the can. There is also a welded seam on the side of the can. All of these seams can be distorted or broken if subject to impact or high force.
- Damaged can seams are more likely to fail unexpectedly and cause injury or property damage.
- **ALWAYS** take more care when handling a distorted or damaged can.
- **NEVER** drop an aerosol spray can on a hard surface. If this occurs, inspect the can for any damage or distortion of the seams prior to continuing use. If damaged carefully expel the contents and dispose of the empty can into either the waste bin or recycle bin.

### 5 Aerosol Spray Paint Cans contain Flammable Materials

- All Dulux Aerosol Spray Paints contain flammable gas propellant.
- Most Dulux Aerosol Spray Paints also contain flammable solvents.
- **ALWAYS** use Aerosol Spray Paints in a well ventilated area with good airflow.
- **NEVER** smoke when using Aerosol Spray Paint or immediately afterwards when flammable vapours may be present.
- **NEVER** use Aerosol Spray Paints near or around sources of ignition which might expose them to high temperatures or sources of ignition. (e.g. heater, oven, cooktop, barbeque, pilot light, welding equipment, grinding equipment, incandescent lighting, other sparking equipment or tools etc.)
- The propellant gases used in Dulux Aerosol Spray Paints are odourless, and heavier than air. They can, and will, settle into low points and hollows in poorly ventilated buildings and rooms, and can build sufficient concentrations in these situations to form a flammable mixture, that on exposure to a flame, spark or high heat will ignite.
- Such gases can also travel through the air, to points well away from the original area of use. Make sure that the flow of gas, and solvent, exiting from the Aerosol can does not travel towards any ignition source.

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- When using Dulux Aerosol Spray Paint in a confined area, (e.g. inside a house or room, inside a cupboard or under a sink etc.) use in short two or three second bursts only. **Open** windows and doors prior to spraying to ensure good ventilation.
- Ensure that all flammable gas and solvent has dissipated prior to using any source of ignition.

### 6 Aerosol Spray Paint Cans Contain Materials Under Pressure

- All Dulux Aerosol Spray Paint is supplied in pressurised cans.
- **ALWAYS** wear Safety Glasses when using Aerosol Spray Paint to reduce potential to spray paint in your eyes.
- Aerosol Spray Paint cans increase in pressure with a rise in temperature.
- **ALWAYS** keep Aerosol Spray Paint cans cool and away from direct sunlight and sources of heat.
- **NEVER** pierce or crush an aerosol can even when it appears empty. It is a feature of the gas used in Aerosol Spray Paints that it maintains a constant high pressure in the can. An empty can retains the same pressure as a full can, so exhibits the same danger if mistreated.

### 7 Aerosol Spray Paint Cans and Corrosion

- Aerosol Spray Paint cans **MUST** be protected from corrosive environments.
- You must never keep Aerosol Spray Paint cans in areas where they can be exposed to condensation, rain, standing water or corrosive chemicals.
- Aerosol Spray Paint cans will show visible signs of corrosion – rust – generally along the seams and inside the top cupped sections of the can.
- Any corrosion (rust) on an Aerosol Spray Paint can **MUST** be treated as a serious condition and care taken when using or expelling the contents and when disposing.

### 8 How to Dispose of Used Aerosol Spray Paint Cans

- DULUX Aerosol Steel Spray Paint cans are suitable for recycling – **WHEN EMPTY**
- Most Councils accept aerosols in their kerbside collection schemes and at waste disposal sites. In fact, around 90% of Australians are able to recycle their empty post-consumer aerosols.
- To find out if your council accepts aerosols, call them, visit [www.recyclingnearyou.com.au](http://www.recyclingnearyou.com.au), or call the Recycling Hotline: 1300 733 712. If they don't accept aerosols, encourage them to do so!
- Place your **EMPTY** aerosols straight into your recycling bin, along with other aluminium or steel household waste.
- **DO NOT** pierce, squash or separate them. It helps, but is not essential, if you remove any large plastic parts that come off easily, like the lid.
- To dispose of any **full or part-full** aerosols, contact your local council as many offer **Household Hazardous Waste Collections** throughout the year.

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- To dispose of **nearly empty** aerosols, spray unwanted paint onto newspaper, allow to dry and dispose of remaining contents/container in accordance with local, regional, national and international regulations.

For further recycling information go to: <http://aerosol.com.au/about-aerosols/aerosol-recycling/>

### 9 What to do with a Corroded Aerosol Spray Paint Can

- You must take **EXTREME CARE** in handling and disposing of any aerosol can you find that is corroded on the outside.
- When handling or disposing of a corroded (rusted) aerosol can you must wear the appropriate **Personal Protective Equipment** (PPE)
- PPE for handling such cans includes Safety Goggles or a full Face Shield (not just Safety Glasses), strong leather gloves (preferably gauntlet style) over chemical resistant nitrile rubber gloves, and a Leather apron or similar to protect your body.
- **NEVER** point the top or the base of a corroded (rusted) can at yourself or another person.
- Corroded (rusted) cans **MUST** always be **FULLY EMPTIED** before disposing of them to the waste or recycling streams.
- Remember it is **NOT ACCEPTABLE** to dispose of a dangerous product into the recycling stream that may present a danger to a worker in a sorting or recycling facility.



### TO EMPTY A CORRODED AEROSOL SPRAY PAINT CAN YOU MUST FOLLOW THE STEPS BELOW.

- **NEVER SHAKE** a rusted can
- The steps taken to vent the gas from a can will depend on the nature of the Aerosol Spray Paint that you are disposing.
- All Aerosol Spray Paints (except clear coatings) suffer from settling of pigments to the bottom of the can, in storage. It is when this pigment is not properly mixed that blockages of valves occurs. That is why shaking of the cans is required – to mix in this pigment.
- When an Aerosol Spray Paint can is corroded (rusted), we cannot predict the strength of the can in the rusted areas, and the simple shaking action could cause it to fail explosively
- We need to treat all rusted Aerosol Spray Paint cans carefully and gently.

For aerosol spray paint cans that normally spray in the **UPRIGHT POSITION** please take the following steps.

1. Put on required PPE (as described above)
2. **GENTLY** pick up the corroded can and take it to an outside location in a well ventilated position away from any sources of ignition.
3. **NEVER** point the top or the base of a corroded (rusted) can at yourself or another person.

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4. Without shaking **SLOWLY** rotate it to an inverted position (upside down) with the valve pointing to the ground.
5. Point the spray nozzle away from yourself and stand in an upwind position from the expected venting gas.
6. Hold the can firmly in one hand and with the other hand press open the valve.
7. Gas must start to escape. Hold the nozzle open as long as you are able. If your hand on the nozzle becomes tired, take a break before continuing. If you need to put the can down at this time do so in smooth gentle movements.
8. During the venting the can may become cold and condensation form on the can. This is normal.
9. Continue venting until the gas flow ceases. (This could take up to 10 minutes depending on how full was the can to start with.)
10. Once the gas flow ceases turn the can upright and use a gentle swirling action to very lightly agitate the remaining contents. **DO NOT SHAKE the can.** Use this gentle swirling action for 30-60 seconds.
11. With the can in the upright position expel the remaining contents onto newspaper.
12. When empty, dispose of the can in the recycle bin. (See section 8. Recycling of Aerosol Spray Paint Cans above.)
13. Allow the expelled paint to dry on the newspaper and then dispose of in the waste bin

For Aerosol Spray Paint cans that normally spray in the **UPSIDE DOWN POSITION** please take the following steps.

1. Put on required PPE (as described above)
2. **GENTLY** pick up the corroded can and take it to an outside location in a well ventilated position away from any sources of ignition.
3. **NEVER** point the top or the base of a corroded (rusted) can at yourself or another person.
4. Keeping the can in the **upright** position, point the spray nozzle away from yourself and stand in an upwind position from the expected venting gas.
5. Hold the can firmly in one hand and with the other press open the valve
6. Gas must start to escape. Hold the nozzle open as long as you are able. If your hand on the nozzle becomes tired, take a break before continuing. If you need to put the can down at this time do so in smooth gentle movements.
7. During venting the can may become cold and condensation may form on the can. This is normal.
8. Continue venting until the gas flow ceases. (This could take up to 10 minutes depending on how full the can was to start with.)
9. Once the gas flow ceases, use a gentle swirling action to very lightly agitate the remaining contents. **DO NOT SHAKE** the can. Use this gentle swirling action for 30-60 seconds.
10. Turn the can upside down and expel remaining contents onto newspaper.
11. When empty, dispose of the can to the recycle bin. (See notes on Recycling of Aerosol Spray Paint Cans at Point 8 above.)

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12. Allow the expelled paint to dry on the newspaper and then dispose of in the waste bin

NB: If an aerosol can is rusted or corroded, it may explode on impact. Wear safety glasses and chemical resistant gloves, and carefully spray out the entire contents, taking precautions to ensure that the can is not dropped or knocked against anything during this process. If the can blocks, or fails to empty completely, contact your local council for advice, or carefully place it in a cardboard box, with lid secured, and place this box in the general waste bin, for landfill disposal. Do not drop other waste on top of it.

- Check [www.recyclingnearyou.com.au](http://www.recyclingnearyou.com.au) for information on local council disposal.
- **N.B. ONLY EMPTY** cans can be placed into the recycle stream.

### 10 What to do if the Aerosol Spray Paint Can Blocks and Fails to Spray.

- These comments apply only to aerosol spray paint cans.
- If an aerosol spray paint can blocks, it will be in one of two locations on the exit of the paint from the can, either:
  - In the Nozzle (actuator) that you press, or,
  - In the Valve that sits at the top part of the can.
- **NEVER** remove the nozzle and attempt to push anything down into the valve system.
- There is **no accessible area** in the valve system that can be cleared from the outside.

**If attempting to clear a blockage always do so whilst wearing safety glasses and chemical resistant gloves and perform the procedure in an open well ventilated area.**

**Nozzle blockages** can be cleared by removal of the nozzle and soaking for an hour or more in **Enamel Thinners**<sup>1</sup>.

1. **GENTLY** remove the nozzle by twisting it as you pull it away from the can
2. Place enough Enamel Thinners in a small glass jar to cover the nozzle.
3. Allow the nozzle to soak for 30 minutes then gently shake the glass jar to move the Enamel Thinners around and through the nozzle
4. Repeat the above step.
5. Remove the nozzle and dry before replacing it on the valve.
6. **GENTLY** replace the nozzle by twisting it as you push it back on the can. NB. The nozzle only needs to be secure on the can. It will locate and clip into place the first time that you depress the nozzle.

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<sup>1</sup> When using Enamel Thinners or any other solvent for cleaning purposes make sure to read ALL of the SDS safety information and follow directions for use on the Enamel Thinners container label.

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**Valve blockages** on male valves (those with a small plastic tube protruding from the top of the can) can sometimes be cleared, but care must be taken not to exert excessive force on the system that breaks the valve or the can.

1. Put on appropriate PPE
2. Start by placing a piece of absorptive waste fabric or paper on a hard surface
3. Gently, and in a twisting motion remove the nozzle from the valve
4. Gently turn the can upside down
5. Place the valve tube onto the fabric and GENTLY push down on the fabric to activate the valve.
6. Do this repeatedly (up to 10 times). If paint starts to flow or clear gas emerges then the valve is cleared.
7. If the valve clears carefully replace the nozzle with a twisting motion.
8. Make sure to properly shake the can before attempting to spray out the contents
9. If the valve fails to clear dispose of the can as per directions in section 8 How to Dispose of Used Aerosol Spray Paint Cans.

### 11 Aerosol Paint and Volatile Substance Abuse

**Volatile Substance Abuse**, also called 'sniffing', 'huffing', 'bagging' or 'chroming', is extremely dangerous and can kill instantly. There are more than 200 types of household, medical and industrial products in Australia that contain potentially intoxicating volatile substances. The health impacts of abuse of any of these products can be serious or fatal.<sup>2</sup>

Advice on solvent abuse is available on sites such as;

- <http://www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au/health-risks/volatile-substance/reviews/background-information>
- LIFELINE      [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)      Phone 24/7 13 11 14
- KIDSLINE      [www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au)      Phone 24/7 1800 55 1800
- Australian Drug Information Network      [www.adin.com.au/help-support-services](http://www.adin.com.au/help-support-services)

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<sup>2</sup> VSA info from [www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au/health-risks/volatile-substance/reviews/background-information](http://www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au/health-risks/volatile-substance/reviews/background-information)