



# Clean Indoor Air

## Modern interior paints and coatings are low emission

Since the broad introduction of water-based, solvent-free interior paints and coatings in the 1980s, indoor air pollution from recently applied paints and coatings has decreased significantly.

Today, water-based paints, coatings and plasters cover roughly 75% of the market. Solvent-based products still have their justification, especially in the professional sector. Stringent legal requirements ensure that coating materials do not cause any health problems.

## Preservatives are essential for water-based paints

Water-based paints, coatings and plasters are sensitive to microbial contamination by fungi, algae and bacteria. Without preservatives, they would spoil in the paint bucket in a short time. For most persons, isothiazolinones in indoor air do not cause any health concern. Only for persons who have already developed an isothiazolinone allergy can the stay in recently painted rooms lead to allergic reactions. Therefore, allergy sufferers should use preservative-free products. Strict limit values apply for the use of isothiazolinones. Furthermore, already since 2000 the paint industry has been committed to the strict labelling of isothiazolinones.

## European chaos in the implementation of emission limit values

The EU Construction Products Regulation sets basic requirements for emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), e.g. solvents and preservatives, into indoor air.

Construction products which comply with a European harmonised product standard must declare their emissions accordingly and bear the CE mark. However, most product standards lack provisions on how to assess and label indoor air emissions.

The consequence is a chaos of different national testing methods and assessment systems which obstruct the single market.

**This is  
what  
we are  
calling  
for**

### ✓ Preserved and preservative-free paints side by side

At the current state of the art, it is by no means possible to formulate all water-based paints and coatings without preservatives. Thus, preservatives remain necessary for many products. Therefore, their use must not be discriminated against.

### ✓ Limitation to relevant construction products

The scope of the EU Construction Products Regulation should be limited to products that account for emissions to a significant extent. These do not include many interior paints, coatings and plasters which are solvent-free and minimised in emissions.

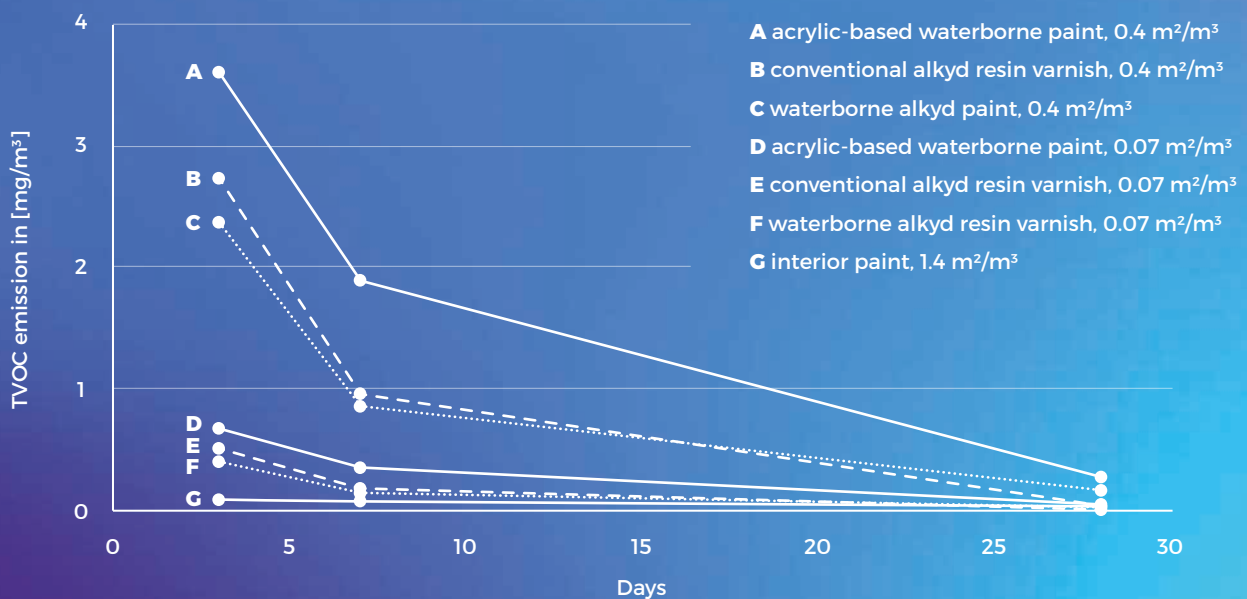
### ✓ Harmonised rules on indoor air emissions across Europe

Existing national regulations on the implementation of emission limit values should be standardised by a European regulation on indoor emissions, which should take into consideration the essential elements of existing national requirements.



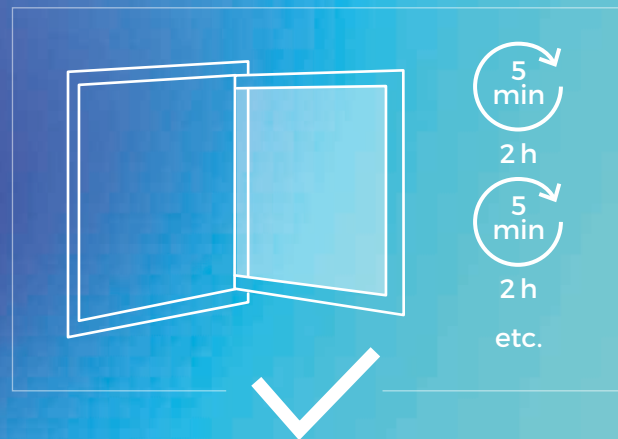
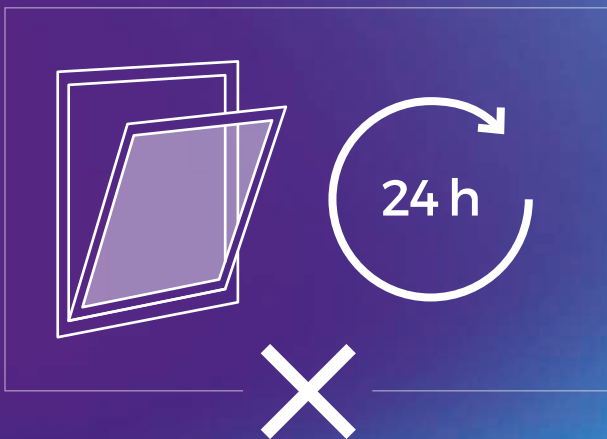
## Emission measurements show that indoor air contamination with volatile organic compounds (TVOC) is decreasing rapidly

(Source: Dr. Robert-Murjahn-Institut GmbH)



In the first 24 hours, a freshly painted room should be aired for five minutes every two hours.

When airing, please open the window fully!



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