

February 12, 2019

John Robert Menard Jr.
Menards
5101 Menard Drive
Eau Claire, WI 54703

Dear Mr. Menard:

On behalf of our many members and supporters throughout the Midwest, we are writing to request that Menards take action to phase-out and ban the sale of paint removers that contain methylene chloride and N-methylpyrrolidone (NMP). These chemicals are dangerous and should not be on store shelves. Methylene chloride has been linked to more than 60 deaths nationwide since 1980 and is linked to lung and liver cancer, neurotoxicity, and reproductive toxicity. NMP, which is sometimes substituted for methylene chloride in paint removers, impacts fetal development and can cause miscarriage and stillbirth.

Families across the country have been losing loved ones to products containing methylene chloride for decades, even though safer alternatives exist. In just the last two years, at least four Americans have died using paint strippers containing methylene chloride.

The tide is beginning to turn on these dangerous products. Last year, eleven major North American home improvement and auto parts retailers, including The Home Depot, Lowe's, Walmart, Sherwin-Williams, AutoZone, and Amazon, pledged to stop selling products containing methylene chloride and NMP and transition to safer alternatives. Plus, manufacturers have recently started selling new safer and effective products.

In contrast, we're disappointed by the lack of public action displayed by Menards on this important issue. We expect the health and safety of your customers to be a top priority. If your company continues its inaction on this issue, the delay could lead to more tragedy and affect Menards's good name as a home improvement leader.

Menards has an opportunity to do the right thing. Just like your company committed to phasing out the sale of phthalates in vinyl flooring in 2015, Menards needs to also take action on harmful chemicals found in paint removers.

As a market leader, we respectfully request that you immediately publicly commit to stop selling paint stripping products containing methylene chloride and NMP. Please reply to Lauren Olson at laureno@ecocenter.org to share your plan to make a public commitment or to set up a meeting to discuss our concerns and recommendations. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mary Brady-Enerson, Michigan Director
Clean Water Action Michigan

Deanna White, State Director
Clean Water Action Minnesota

Mike Garfield, Executive Director
Ecology Center

Nathan Murphy, State Director
Environment Michigan

Dr. Rose Brewer, Board Chair
Environmental Justice Advocates of Minnesota

Howard Learner, Director
Environmental Law and Policy Center

Abe Scarr, State Director
Illinois PIRG

Bill Davis, Chapter Director
John Muir Chapter Sierra Club

Martha Moriarty, Executive Director
LDA Minnesota

Bev Johns, President
Learning Disabilities Association of Illinois

Paula Hamp, President
Learning Disabilities Association of Iowa

Crystal Young, President
Learning Disabilities Association of Michigan

Kimberlee Wright, Director
Midwest Environmental Advocates

Amy Schultz, RN, President
Physicians for Social Responsibility – WI

Claire Gervais, MD, and
Monica Vohmann, MD, Co-Presidents
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Peter Skopec, State Director
Wisconsin PIRG

Irene Herron-Steeger, President
WisCOSH, Inc.