



## The Facts on Home Improvement HAZMAT

Sending or receiving home improvement-related items in the mail or by courier delivery? You're responsible for properly classifying what you're shipping prior to offering it into the transportation system—and that means you need to know what constitutes a hazardous material, and how to ship it safely.

### Examples of home improvement products that might be regulated as hazardous materials:

- Oil-based paints
- Spray paints
- Paint thinners and mineral spirits
- Paint strippers
- Alcohols, such as denatured alcohol and isopropyl alcohol
- Pool chemicals
- Insect repellents/pesticides
- Aerosol spray cans
- Furniture polish
- Drain cleaner
- Oven cleaner
- Tub and tile cleaner
- Toilet bowl cleaner
- Lime removal chemicals
- Carpet and upholstery cleaners or spot removers
- Bleach
- Disinfectants
- Ammonia, possibly including some glass cleaners
- Air fresheners
- Roofing tar
- Caulking compounds
- Glues
- Smoke detectors (ionizing smoke detectors)
- Cement products
- Flooring mastic
- Pesticides
- Fertilizers
- Lithium battery powered tools and devices

Many items sold at home improvement stores and garden centers may be considered hazardous waste. This is not a comprehensive list of hazardous home improvement items; it is simply meant to represent the types of dangerous goods that amateurs and professionals alike might use for home repair, maintenance, and building projects. Raw chemicals, pure ingredients, and concentrates may be hazardous, while consumer products with lower concentrations of these chemicals may not be hazardous. Always locate the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for your specific product before shipping. You can use the SDS prepared by the manufacturer to determine whether your product is hazmat and is restricted for shipping purposes. Manufacturers must classify their product before shipping.

Meet **Hazardous Matt** and his friends. They are made of hazardous materials, which means that we need to take extra care when we send them somewhere.

**Remember:** it's your responsibility to know whether a product is hazardous and to communicate that hazard appropriately! Be sure to say something when you drop off your package.

# Follow These Steps to Safely CHECK THE BOX and Ship HAZMAT Home Improvement Products



## ✓ 1 Classify the Hazardous Material\* and Locate It on the Hazardous Materials Table

As a starting point, look up the product's [Safety Data Sheet \(SDS\)](#). Most consumer products that come from reputable manufacturers will have a SDS that includes a transportation hazard classification for the product. This classification provides a four-digit ID number, a proper shipping name, the hazard class, and the packing group for the product. Use this information to identify the correct entry on the Hazardous Materials Table.

The [Hazardous Materials Table](#) contains references to the appropriate packaging sections, certain quantity limitations, and any special provisions or exceptions. The table also contains the label codes and basic description for the hazmat. Obtaining the correct hazard classification is the most important part of getting started with shipping hazmat. All other requirements, including packaging, marks, labels, and shipping paper requirements, will be based on the hazard classification of a product. The DOT hazmat regulations provide classification criteria that manufacturers, shippers, and others can use to classify hazardous material. Certain types of hazmat require PHMSA's approval of the classification determination prior to shipment (e.g., explosives).

## □ 2 Determine Quantities and Select Packaging

Select the appropriate packaging based on the amount of hazmat you are looking to ship. Be sure to use the packaging section specified for your material. Depending on the hazmat and quantities, performance packaging (UN Standard or DOT-Specification packaging) may be required.

## □ 3 Package Your Material

Package your hazmat according to the packaging requirements in the regulations. If performance packaging is required, you must follow the manufacturer's instructions on how to assemble and close the packaging. This includes using the specified inner and outer packagings and closure materials, as applicable. Performance packaging is specifically designed and tested to contain hazmat. Deviating from the manufacturer's instructions could compromise the integrity of the packaging and result in a release of hazmat.

## □ 4 Mark and Label Your Package

Apply the appropriate [hazard communication](#) to your package. This can include, but is not limited to, orientation arrows, shipper's information, identification number and proper shipping name markings, and hazard class labels.

## □ 5 Prepare Shipping Paper

If required, prepare a shipping paper that contains a description of the hazmat, including the UN identification number, proper shipping name, hazard class, and packing group, quantity, number and type of packages, emergency contact information, and a shipper's certification. Additional information may be required, depending on the material to be transported.

## □ 6 Offer Your Package to Your Carrier of Choice

Be sure to work closely with your carrier to identify any additional carrier requirements to ensure that your package arrives at its destination quickly and safely. Please note that as a government agency, DOT does not endorse or recommend a specific vendor.

While the list above is **not a substitute for training or the regulations**, it should be a helpful priming guide that will help you ship products containing hazardous materials.

\* The U.S. Department of Transportation has established specific transportation hazard classification criteria for materials based on their chemical and physical properties (e.g., flammability, corrosivity, toxicity). Be sure to identify any hazards when sending products using the mail or other shipping services. It is your responsibility to know whether the product is hazardous and to communicate those hazards appropriately! CAUTION: An SDS may contain incorrect information, and it is ultimately the responsibility of the shipper to classify the product correctly. If you are the manufacturer of your product and you are also the initial shipper, then you must provide the correct hazard classification. This is usually accomplished through testing.

