



FORMALDEHYDE AND PASSIVE SAMPLING

Concerns have been raised at the Faculty of Occupational Hygiene Committee regarding the accuracy of measuring airborne formaldehyde concentrations using passive samplers where the source of formaldehyde is formalin.

There is potential for a negative interference with methanol in the formalin resulting in underestimation of exposures. This is potentially also an issue with other aqueous solutions containing methanol which are not marketed under the 'formalin' name, such as some embalming solutions.

Discussions have taken place with suppliers which have concluded that diffusive samplers can be used to measure formaldehyde from formalin; however, advice and guidance from your supplier should be sought regarding any prospective sampling errors occurring from the methanol content of the sampled solution.

Occupational hygienists should consider confirming with the supplier that any interference caused by the methanol content does not exceed any predicted measurement of the formaldehyde overall. Also, occupational hygienists should recognise that the level of methanol declared in the Safety Data Sheet may not be wholly accurate.