



Things you should know about selling inhalable products in Queensland

Staff fact sheet

A range of everyday household products can be deliberately inhaled for the purpose of getting intoxicated. This fact sheet has been developed to assist retailers to play their part in the community response to inhalant use.

Important points

- It is illegal to sell spray paint to anyone aged under 18.
- If you know or reasonably believe someone is going to misuse an inhalable product, you have a legal obligation to refuse sale.
- You must not base a decision to refuse sale on unreasonable grounds, such as age (except for spray paint), gender or race.

Signs a person might be using inhalants:

- appearing dazed, dizzy or disoriented
- chemical smell on clothes, skin or breath
- deodorant powder, paint or glue stains on clothes or skin
- slurred or difficult to understand speech
- irritated skin around the nose and mouth
- red, glassy eyes
- unsteady on their feet
- nervous, excited or irritated behaviour
- a person using inhalants may behave in a similar way to someone intoxicated from alcohol.

Other signs that a person might be misusing a product include:

- asking for specific products you know can be used for intoxication
- frequent purchases of a product you know can be used for intoxication
- purchasing a large quantity of a product you know can be used for intoxication.

Refusing sale

If you think someone is going to misuse an inhalable product:

- Calmly explain to the person that it is against the law to sell them the product. Most people will accept this and leave without incident.
- Use “we” statements instead of “I” statements. This shows it is not the salesperson’s decision, it is the store policy and the law.
- Refer to signage that reinforces this policy.
- Offer to get the store manager to explain the policy.

Safety

If the person becomes abusive or threatening, consider the safety of staff and other customers. In some cases it may NOT be safe to refuse sale. If this happens, ensure the staff member is supported after any incident and consider your options in notifying youth or community services or contacting police.

In the event of an emergency, immediately dial Triple Zero “000” and contact the store manager.

This resource has been developed by Dovetail through the Australian Government’s Petrol Sniffing Strategy.

insight.qld.edu.au/inhalantsupply



Australian Government

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Dovetail

Supporting the youth alcohol and other drug sector in Queensland