

Ditto-machine fluid harmful, union charges Article 1 of 1 found

USA Today

March 22, 1995; Page F-2

Section: Living

Article ID: DNVR300902 -- 202 words

Those smelly, purple-ink sheets that teachers regularly crank out on low-tech ditto machines may be hazardous to everyone's health, says the American Federation of Teachers.

Darryl Alexander, AFT's workplace health and safety director, says a brief study found that ditto machine fluid has excessive amounts of methanol, a highly volatile alcohol. A spot check of schools from California, Pennsylvania, Missouri, Michigan, the District of Columbia, Louisiana and Oklahoma found that ditto machines are still in frequent use.

Alexander said exposure to methanol in schools can be much higher than levels allowed in workplaces by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

Methanol has a 'high odor threshold' and by the time you smell it, 'you've already been overexposed.' she said.

The AFT study was prompted by teacher complaints of headaches, nausea and other ailments. Alexander proposes a survey to find how prevalent ditto machines are and gauge potential health problems."

"Study raises health concern about ditto machines, Gannett News Service Same as above.