

*Scientific Study*

# *The Deadly News*

**“Newspaper ink contains toluene, a colorless and flammable liquid.”**

Reading the morning newspaper can be hazardous to your health.

You may be thinking of all the sad and depressing news about the economy, crimes, and other negative news, but it's not the news that will get you. It's the ink it's printed with.

Newspaper ink contains toluene, a colorless and flammable liquid derived from petroleum or coal tar. Toluene is used as an industrial solvent in chemicals, detergents, perfumes, some medicines, dyes, and aviation fuel. Toluene is also known as methylbenzene, toluol, and phenylmethane.

Toluene is highly addictive and commonly abused by 'huffing' glue. Toluene is a central nervous system de-

pressant. Symptoms of toluene toxicity include fatigue, sleepiness, headaches, cardiac arrhythmia, and nausea. More severe toxicity may cause liver inflammation and hemorrhaging of the lungs, ultimately leading to death.

The toluene levels found in this study were actually from newspaper stands where a much larger quantity of newspapers could be found when compared to a single newspaper in a home.

In some cases the toluene levels in the newspaper stands exceeded 100 times the levels outside the stands.

This is a good warning to dispose of yesterday's paper instead of allowing papers to stack up in the home where they may sicken small children, pets, and susceptible individuals.

And you thought it was the news that was sickening? The morning paper will never be the same!

Thank goodness for the news is on the internet!

## Reference

Caselli M, de Gennaro G, Saracino MR, Tutino M. Indoor contaminants from newspapers: VOCs emissions in newspaper stands. *Environ Res.* 2009 Feb;109(2):149-57. Epub 2008 Dec 23.

