

Fact Sheet for Vikane Gas Fumigant (Sulfuryl Fluoride)

In the interest of Dow AgroSciences' commitment to product stewardship, this fact sheet is intended to provide basic information about the product and how it is used. If you have specific questions about your fumigation, refer to documents provided by the fumigator or call the fumigator listed on the warning signs posted on your structure. If you have questions about Vikane* gas fumigant (the fumigant used) or the procedures described, call the Dow AgroSciences Customer Information Center at 1-800-352-6776.

WHY BUILDINGS ARE FUMIGATED

Insects that feed or tunnel into wood can seriously damage houses, apartments, and other dwellings or structures. Each year termites or other wood destroying insects damage approximately 2 million homes. Depending on the extent or location of the infestation, fumigation is the only total control method proven to eliminate certain infestations of wood destroying insects.

HOW BUILDINGS ARE FUMIGATED

Because Vikane is a gas, prior to fumigation, the structure is completely sealed. This serves to contain Vikane in the building so it can penetrate wood thoroughly and eliminate the pests. Depending on the construction of the building, the doors and windows may be sealed with tape and a plastic sheet, or the structure may be covered with a tarp. The building will remain sealed for 2-72 hours depending on the specifics of the job. Warning signs are posted around the building notifying people to keep out.

After the tarp or tape is removed, a professional fumigator will aerate the structure by opening the doors and windows. Fans may also be used to clear out the building. Once the dwelling has been thoroughly aerated, the fumigator is required to measure the level of any fumigant remaining in the living space to ensure it is below the EPA approved concentration for reentry by the occupants. Extremely low levels of fumigant can remain for a short period of time in dead air spaces between walls and inside cabinets as well as porous materials such as furniture. The small amount of fumigant in these areas will continue to dissipate for a few hours after the fumigation but at levels well below the established safe reentry concentration. Your building should not be cleared for reoccupancy until it is safe to enter. The fumigator will post a notice on your building indicating the day and time for reentry. Structures can be occupied only when the concentration is 5 parts per million or less (this represents a margin of safety - laboratory animals have been exposed to 100 parts per million for 2 weeks with no adverse effects.) Because Vikane is a true gas and not a vapor, aeration is rapid. Recent studies demonstrated that in most structures levels are less than 1 part per million within 6 hours of clearing and have no detectable levels of Vikane within 24 hours after the start of aeration.

Sulfuryl fluoride is a colorless, odorless gas, so a warning agent is added to the building that causes watery eyes and a scratchy throat. If you experience these symptoms in a structure that has been recently fumigated, you should leave immediately and call the pest control company to have your building retested.

SULFURYL FLUORIDE (POTENTIAL HEALTH RISKS FROM OVEREXPOSURE)

Sulfuryl fluoride is a gas and can potentially enter your body only through inhalation. Because it is a gas, it does not stay on dry surfaces, therefore, there is no exposure from touching treated surfaces.

Nervous system and respiratory irritation:

Overexposure to high levels of sulfuryl fluoride can result in nose and throat irritation and nausea. At high concentrations (such as those used during the fumigation) it can cause excess fluid in the lungs, sleepiness, pneumonia, and convulsions. These symptoms would be expected to appear within 8 hours after such an exposure. In the unlikely event you experience these symptoms in the building that has been recently fumigated, you should leave immediately. Consult your physician and call the pest control company to have your building retested.

Additional studies:

Sulfuryl fluoride has not been shown to cause birth defects in pregnant animals exposed under experimental conditions. In addition, current studies have demonstrated there are no mutagenic or genotoxic effects caused by exposure to sulfuryl fluoride.

Safety Precautions and Homeowner Preparation

- Discuss the treatment program in advance with your pest control company so you fully understand what will be done and what you need to do.
- Carefully follow the instructions you are given about what items you are to remove from your building.
- Stay out of the treated building until it is cleared for reentry.
- If you are interested or concerned, you should ask your pest control company to show the records of how your building was aerated before it was cleared to reentry.
- You may wish to increase ventilation by opening doors and windows.

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