

Ethylbenzene (C₈H₁₀)

What is Ethylbenzene?

Ethylbenzene is a colorless, flammable liquid that smells like gasoline. It is naturally found in coal, tar and petroleum and is also found in manufactured products such as inks, pesticides, and paints.

Ethylbenzene is used primarily to make the chemical styrene. Other uses include as a solvent, in fuels, and to make other chemicals.

Does Ethylbenzene have any additional names?

Ethylbenzol, Phenylethane, alpha-Methyltoluene, EB

What are the known health effects?

Some people who drink water containing ethylbenzene well in excess of the MCL over many years could experience problems with their liver or kidneys.

How does exposure occur?

Ethylbenzene moves easily into the air from water and soil. In surface water, it breaks down by reacting with other chemicals found naturally in water. Ethylbenzene can move through soil into groundwater and is broken down in soil by bacteria.

Ethylbenzene is not often found in drinking water. Higher levels may be found in residential drinking water wells near landfills, waste sites, or leaking underground fuel storage tanks.

Is this contaminant regulated?

Yes, and water supplied to customers of Mount Laurel MUA is in compliance with USEPA and NJDEP requirements. The maximum concentration of Ethylbenzene permitted in drinking water is 700 ppb; water supplied to MLTMUA customers has not detected Ethylbenzene.

How can I reduce exposure?

Ethylbenzene can be removed from drinking water through granular activated carbon.

Additional information for Ethylbenzene, including the information referenced, can be found at:

<https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-09/documents/ethylbenzene.pdf>

<https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxprofiles/tp110.pdf>