

Dear Friend,

Each month, BOWA Home Advisor provides you with important tips on how to improve and protect your home's value. We hope the following is helpful.



Whole-House Renovation
Great Falls, VA

Do you know the scoop on paint?

Paints are classified into two basic categories: latex and solvent-based. Solvent-based paints are typically oil-based and were once popular for their high-gloss and hard-wearing finish. Unfortunately, the solvents used to dissolve and/or disperse the paint and other ingredients were found to be extremely harmful to both people and the environment.

Growing concern over such harmful effects has resulted in EPA regulations, which significantly reduced the allowable volatile organic compounds (VOC's) in most paints and stains. In 1999, those regulations took effect nationally, and more recently, states and counties have started to adopt even tougher standards than the EPA to further reduce air pollution. This has effectively prohibited the use of many oil-based coatings (and their more modern iteration, alkyd paints) along the East Coast and in other portions of the country.

While the oil-based coating market had already been diminishing, these regulatory changes would ensure that today's improved water-based paints would dominate the market. With lower VOC levels and fewer health-related concerns, latex paints are more user friendly than their oil-based counterparts – they are quick drying, non-yellowing and easy to clean up with soap and water. In addition, latex paints are preferred for surfaces that get wet, such as siding. Unlike oil-based paints that dry to an inflexible coating that blocks moisture, surfaces painted with latex allow moisture to escape and evaporate. These characteristics help to avoid future mildew problems and the paint cracks and blisters typical with oil-based coatings.

With manufacturers focusing almost exclusively on latex paint technologies, the formulas have been greatly enhanced over the years. For example, today's washable interior latex flats for walls and ceilings now offer the durability of tough flat oils. The adhesion of acrylic primers and paints to various substrates now approaches or equals the adhesion properties of oil primers and paints. And, today's high-quality acrylic

latex paints – especially those with higher sheen or gloss – are exceptional at resisting moisture, dirt and stains and even stand up to repeated washing or scrubbing. Finally, today’s high-quality latex paints practically achieve the same smooth finish of yesterday’s oil-based paints thanks to leveling properties that make brush and roller marks barely noticeable and a longer “wet-edge time,” which improves blending.

The bottom line is, while oil-based coatings once corned the market, today’s advanced latex formulations have made their government-mandated absence almost negligible.

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If you would like more information on any of these topics or if there are other ways we can be of service, please contact [BOWA Builders](#).

Regards.



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