

Myth #1

Ethylene Oxide is going to be banned.

Truth: EtO is not being banned. The issue involves the restriction on CFC's and HCFC's that have been used as propellants in 12/88 or CO₂ 10/90 blends in some systems. CFC production was banned in the US as of January 1, 1996. Certain Hydrofluorocarbons (HCFC's) are scheduled to be restricted in future compliance with the Montreal Protocol. All of this is unrelated to the Anprolene and EOGas systems which use 100% EtO.

Myth #2

Ethylene Oxide is more toxic than other chemicals in the hospital workplace.

Truth: When comparing time weighted averages (TWA) and parts per million (ppm), the comparative toxicity of Ethylene Oxide (EtO) to other chemicals is not any more toxic than other chemicals used in the workplace.

We recommend that you proceed with caution with all chemicals you use in any situation. Using simple precautions can prevent problems from happening. Knowing the safety guidelines for each item being used is extremely important. Andersen offers free training for the life of your Anprolene or EOGas sterilizer. This training covers the safety features and operation of the sterilizer and handling of materials. Call 800-523-1276 and ask for your area representative.

Myth #3

Ethylene Oxide is only used for sterilizing delicate instruments.

Truth: EtO can be used to sterilize anything except food, drugs, and liquids. Since there is no heat, pressure or moisture involved, there is no damage to even the most delicate instruments. Using your EtO sterilizer as your primary form of sterilization saves the life of everything you sterilize. You can cut back on overhead from instrument damage and replacement costs, you can re-sterilize those things you might have thrown away thereby saving your facility a lot of money. We have practices that save \$30,000 per year, or more. Call (800) 523-1276 for information on what you could be sterilizing and how much you could be saving each month.

Myth #4

Ethylene Oxide Sterilizers have to be installed outside the facility.

Truth: EtO converts from liquid to gas at 50°F (10°C). Our Anprolene sterilizers operate at room temperature for a 14-hour sterilization cycle. If the sterilizer is installed outside, then the temperature is not controlled and therefore sterilization may not be achieved when temperatures fluctuate. Andersen Sterilizers should be operated inside a facility in a room with 10 air exchanges per hour.

Myth #5

Ethylene Oxide sterilization requires a large tank of Ethylene Oxide and uses pounds of EtO per cycle.

Truth: In 1928 when EtO was introduced to fumigate items being brought into the country as an insecticide in a 12/88 mixture it was used in a chamber vessel. A tank of EtO would mix with CFCs and, under pressure, pump into a room size chamber, to sterilize the items inside. EtO was used in this fashion for some time in this market as well as hospital, industrial, laboratory, and government. In the late 1950's Andersen Products developed the Anprolene gas diffusion technology. Anprolene and EOGas utilize less than 20cc of EtO per cycle enclosed in a sterilization bag, which acts as the chamber. The "chamber" or sterilization bag is contained in an aeration cabinet for the safe release of the EtO through the ventilation and purge systems to exterior of the building. By reducing the amount of ambient air in the bag, the EtO can work more effectively and in smaller quantities. Andersen strives each year to improve on the safety features of the sterilizer, while the basic technology of EtO will always be the same.

Myth #6

Ethylene Oxide is an old and therefore inferior technology.

Truth: In the 1950's it was introduced into the hospital arena for sterilization. In the year 2000 75% of US hospitals used EtO to sterilize their devices. While the methods for delivery have greatly changed, the technology is proven as the most effective, least damaging form of sterilization. Anprolene and EOGas do not use the pounds and tanks of EtO that our grandfathers once used, but they do take advantage of the non-damaging, gentle cycle EtO is known for. Using less than 20cc's per cycle they can effectively sterilize without the hassles or exposure concerns of a chamber type system.

Myth #7

Ethylene Oxide is expensive compared to other forms of sterilization.

Truth: Anprolene and EOGas only require the gas refills; there is no external water source or heat source necessary. Costs for distilled water and pressurized air sources can add up for other forms of sterilization. While the kit replacement cost is expendable, the money saved on overhead of sterilizing those delicate items more than makes up for the damage caused by other methods of sterilization. You also do not have the cost maintenance repairs associated with moisture and pressure. Anprolene and most of the EOGas models run on regular 110V electricity, cutting back on those costs as well. So when comparing year-end savings, the advantages of having an Andersen system pay off.

Myth #8

Ethylene oxide is a greenhouse gas.

Truth: Ethylene oxide is not a greenhouse gas. It does not persist or accrue when released into the environment and is not on the EPA's list of greenhouse gasses.

Myth #9

Ethylene Oxide requires special instrument packaging.

Truth: EtO can use the same packaging as other forms of sterilization, such as cloth and paper products. The advantage of EtO is that you can use a special double-sided plastic package that can be electric impulse sealed, allowing the shelf life of a product to greatly extend past the 30-day expiration most pouches and wraps require, since the plastic is durable, water resistant, and heat sensitive and makes double wrapping a thing of the past.

Myth #10

Ethylene Oxide requires special installation.

Truth: Anprolene and EOGas only require a dedicated exhaust and 110/220V electrical outlet for installation, making it the simplest installation on the market. Where local regulations require it, Andersen has an abator available, which allows for 95% efficiency in reduction of emissions to the outside environment. Some types of EtO require aeration chambers, holding cells, air pressure tanks, water sources, and vacuum. Andersen systems are unique, and sterilize and aerate in the sterilization bag.