

Children`s products

Sector homepage on Chemical Watch

Chemical Watch is delighted to provide the children`s products sector homepage – a lens through which you can view our latest coverage about, and relevant to this specific sector.

This exciting feature pulls together news stories written about the children`s products sector, along with coverage of interest to anyone working within this sector.

In other words, we`re putting everything relevant to you and your organisation within easy reach.

www.chemicalwatch.com/childrensproducts

Vermont advances bill reducing hurdles to banning children`s products

Vermont`s legislature has approved a bill that would give the state`s health commissioner increased authority to ban or restrict children`s products. The governor`s signature is all that stands in the way of the controversial measure becoming law.

In the spotlight among several provisions in S103 are changes to the state`s existing children`s products reporting scheme (Act 188). Current law requires manufacturers to report specific brand and product model information to the state for products containing any of 66 chemicals of concern.

But the bill would modify the requirements around imposing bans or restrictions on products found to be of concern to children`s health.

More specifically, it would amend the exposure criterion for proposing product restrictions from “children will be exposed” to “may be exposed”. And it seeks to strike text requiring there be a likelihood that the exposure could cause or contribute to an adverse health impact.

“The existing law makes the health commissioner jump through unnecessary bureaucratic hoops in order to take action,” Paul Burns, executive director of Vermont Public Interest Research Group (VPIRG), told

Chemical Watch. The legislators intend to give the commissioner “reasonable authority to act once a credible threat has been identified”, he added.

Further changes to Act 188 include:

- » codifying the types of information that must be reported, to include brand name, product model and a universal product code (UPC); and
- » removing the requirement that weight of scientific evidence be used when adding chemicals to the programme, relying instead on “independent, peer-reviewed scientific research”.

See www.chemicalwatch.com/65681 (Published April 2018)

European toy industry seeks exclusions from PAH guideline

Rubber and plastic components of some toys and children`s articles such as bikes, scooters and baby walkers should be excluded from an EU guideline on the restriction on polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, an industry association has said.



Bike helmet © candy1812 - stock.adobe.com

In comments circulated at a meeting of the Competent Authorities for REACH and CLP (Caracal) last week, Toy Industries Europe (TIE) also said the definition of synthetic textiles as rubber and plastic was “overly broad” and would lead to “unnecessary additional testing costs for SMEs”.

Echa published the draft guideline on the scope of the Annex XVII restriction on PAHs in January last year. It then updated it following a stakeholder consultation. A final guideline is expected in the near future, an Echa spokesperson said.

The restriction applies to articles intended for general public use, if any of the rubber or plastic components that come into “direct as well as prolonged contact or short-term repetitive contact” with the skin or the mouth contain more than 1 mg/kg of any of eight identified PAHs.

Toys and childcare articles fall within the scope of the restriction, but the concentration limit is lower at 0.5 mg/kg.

However, TIE says that some components of children`s articles such as the wheels of bikes “should be clearly excluded” as children do not have “prolonged or short-term repetitive contact” with them.

Articles with components that TIE says should be excluded are:

- » run bikes, children`s bikes, toy mower and toy scooters; and

- » high chairs, baby walkers, walking frames, and stationary walkers for indoor and terrace use.

An official at TIE later clarified to Chemical Watch that it was not asking for an exemption, "but rather the appropriate interpretation of the legislative text through clarification".

See www.chemicalwatch.com/64955 (Published March 2018)

EU enforcement project finds non-compliance in jewellery, toys

A wide-ranging European enforcement project, involving 29 EU and EEA countries, has found prohibited levels of cadmium, nickel and lead in jewellery. Inspectors also found restricted phthalates in a fifth of all toy products tested.

REACH-En-Force (Ref-4), coordinated by Echa's Enforcement Forum, aimed to identify non-compliance with restricted substances under Annex XVII.

Inspectors checked 5,625 products comprising 1,009 mixtures, 4,599 articles and 17 substances. Twenty seven of the 29 countries involved in the project reported in a way that results could be combined. Overall 18% of products tested were out of compliance.

Testing was carried out in 2016, when the types of products inspected included: jewellery; textiles; toys and childcare articles; plastic material; glues and spray paints; and brazing fillers.

Jewellery

Inspectors found that 12.1% of jewellery tested contained cadmium above the restricted concentration limit. Almost 7% contained prohibited levels of lead, and nearly 8% had nickel above restricted limits.

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In the EU, cadmium cannot be used or placed on the market above 0.01% concentration by weight of the metal in: metal beads and other metal components for jewellery making, and in metal parts of jewellery and imitation jewellery articles and hair accessories.

Lead cannot be used in any individual part of jewellery articles if the concentration of lead (expressed as 'metal') is above 0.05% by weight. The restriction also applies to individual parts when placed on the market or used for jewellery making.

It is prohibited to market nickel in articles intended to come into direct and prolonged contact with the skin if the rate of release from the parts of these articles is greater than 0.5 µg/cm²/week.

Inspectors also tested clothing articles for the metal and found 11.1% of 27 contained non-compliant levels of the substance.

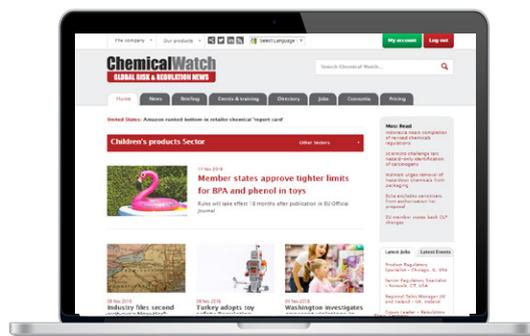


plastic toys - children's health ©Gabriela - fotolia

Phthalates, asbestos, chromium VI

Inspectors found the restricted phthalates DEHP, DBP and BBP in almost 20% of all toy products tested.

They also detected other restricted phthalates DINP, DIDP and DNOP in more than 10% of toys. In total, there were 1,202 phthalate checks in the



project; those in childcare articles were found in less than 10% of products checked.

Out of 213 articles tested for asbestos, 29 were found to be non-compliant. The resulting non-compliance rate is high, considering that the asbestos restriction has been in force in the EU for many years, a report on the results says.

The non-compliant articles were mainly from the secondhand market and "it is possible" that they may have been produced before the restriction of asbestos fibres was enforced, it says. "However, it is prohibited to place any asbestos-containing products on the market."

Inspectors found illegal levels of chromium VI in 13.3% of 467 specifically tested articles. Meanwhile, non-compliant levels of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) were found in 7.9% of 382 targeted articles tested.

The report adds that the highest level of non-compliant imported products came from China at 17%. Products originating from the EU/EEA were non-compliant in a tenth of cases. Inspectors observed that the highest non-compliance rate of 39% was for products whose origin could not be identified.

See www.chemicalwatch.com/63913 (Published March 2018)

Children`s products best-of page

To showcase some of our best coverage from this sector, Chemical Watch has pulled together a sample of our best children`s products articles from recent months, which are available to view right away, or via a quick and simple one-time registration (free of charge).

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