



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE FOR PREVENTION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

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PVC – a major source of phthalates

Polyvinyl chloride, or PVC, is a major source of phthalates – which are the same dangerous plastic softeners banned from children's toys last year.

2008 law banning phthalates from children's toys does not cover the PVC in school supplies

The 2008 law banning phthalates from children's toys does not cover the PVC in school supplies, with which our children come in contact on a daily basis.

Phthalates harm children's health and development by interfering with natural hormone functioning and have been linked to birth defects in baby boys, testicular cancer, liver problems, and early onset of puberty in girls – which is a risk factor for later-life breast cancer.



Related Links

- [Center for Health, Environment & Justice \(CHEJ\)](#)
- [CHEJ Back-to-School Guide to PVC-Free School Supplies](#)
- [Institute for Agriculture & Trade Policy - Food & Health Program: Smart Plastics Guide - Healthier Food Uses of Plastics](#)
- [Link to the video "Sam Suds and the Case of PVC, the Poison Plastic"](#)
- [Slow Death by Rubber Duck - The Secret Danger of Everyday Things, by Rick Smith & Bruce Lourie](#)

Why worry about PVC-free school supplies?

Many children's school supplies, such as lunchboxes, backpacks and binders, can be made out of PVC-a toxic plastic that is dangerous to our health and the environment.

PVC contains dangerous chemical additives including phthalates, lead, cadmium, and/or organotins, which can be toxic to your child's health. These toxic additives can leach out or evaporate into the air over time, posing unnecessary dangers to children.

Here are some school supply shopping tips you can start using today:



The Center for Health, Environment, and Justice (CHEJ) - through its ongoing campaign "PVC: The Poison Plastic - The Campaign for Safe, Healthy Consumer Products" -- has posted its **"2009 Back to School Guide to PVC-Free School Supplies"** to help you avoid dangerous PVC products when back-to-school shopping.


To download the complete guide, [click here](#).

To download a pocket-size guide to carry with you when you shop, [click here](#).

Below are some examples of school supplies which are OK and which to avoid.

Pictures of OK products		Pictures of PVC products to AVOID
PVC Labeling	PVC products are often labeled with the words "vinyl" on the packaging,	

	<p>such as vinyl 3-ring binders.</p>	
<p>PVC can also be identified by looking for the number "3" inside, or the letters "V" or "PVC" underneath, the universal recycling symbol. Just remember, bad news comes in #3's, so don't buy PVC!</p>		
	<p>Make sure the binders have metal rings. These colorful binders are leather with metal rings.</p>	
<p>Backpacks</p>	<p>Avoid backpacks with shiny plastic designs as they often contain PVC and may contain lead.</p>	
	<p>Fabric backpacks can have cloth appliques to make them attractive and safe.</p>	
<p>Art Supplies</p>	<p>Modeling clays are often loaded with phthalates.</p>	
		<p>Look for clays made without PVC and phthalates like Crayola Air-Dry clay.</p>

	
<p>Notebooks</p>	<p>Avoid notebooks containing metal spirals encased in colored plastic. The colored plastic coating on the metal spirals usually contains PVC.</p>  
	<p>Select notebooks with uncovered metal spirals to avoid PVC.</p>
<p>Paper Clips</p>	<p>Most colored paper clips are coated with PVC.</p>  
	<p>Stick to the plain metal paperclips, unless you can see that they are clearly made of colored metal.</p>
<p>Shoes</p>	<p>Shoes similar to (or "knockoffs") Crocs, like the Kamik Doodle, are made with PVC. Many of the charms for Crocs are also made with PVC.</p>  
	<p>Crocs are PVC free; and all Nike, Puma, and L.L. Bean shoes are PVC free. (clockwise from top: Crocs, Nike, Puma, L.L.Bean)</p>



Unfortunately, items made from shiny plastics and vinyl have PVCs in them most of the time, so just check before you buy!

AVOID THESE ►



Clear bag
Cosmetics bag

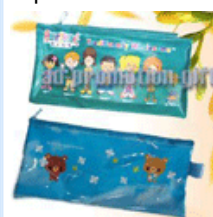
Shiny handbag



PVC flashdrive
tape

Plastic lunchbag

Vinyl



PVC pencilcases

PVC chair

Plastic



raincoat



Vinyl CD sleeve
Banned PVC toys

Vinyl magazine holder



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