



PVC Policies Across the World



Some of the biggest Fortune 500 corporations in the world have enacted sweeping policies to phase out PVC in products and packaging, in favor of safer, cost effective alternatives..

In response to PVC's toxic threats, governments and corporations all around the world have passed sweeping policies to phase out PVC and switch to safer, healthier PVC-free products. We've highlighted just some of the many PVC-free policies and included links to in-depth resources on PVC-free governmental and corporate policies to learn more.

Restrictions on PVC Children's Toys and Baby Products

Phthalates were banned in toys in the United States in 2008. Similar bans have been enacted by the states of California, Washington and Vermont. Restrictions or bans have been placed on phthalates in PVC toys in the entire European Union, Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Japan, Iceland Mexico, Norway, and Sweden. In 1998, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) reached a voluntary agreement with manufacturers to remove two phthalates from PVC rattles, teethingers, pacifiers and baby bottle nipples.

PVC-Free Governmental Purchasing Policies

A number of U.S. cities have passed procurement policies to phase out the purchase of products such as PVC that contribute to dangerous toxic pollution. In December, 2005, New York City passed legislation that will reduce the City's purchase of PVC, yielding its \$11 billion annual purchasing budget to drive markets for safer, environmentally friendly products. Other U.S. cities such as Boston, Seattle, San Francisco, and Buffalo have passed similar purchasing measures.

USGBC: PVC an Unhealthy Building Material

The U.S. Green Building Council, the nation's largest green building organization, released a report on PVC building materials. The report makes clear that PV is not a healthy building material. A proper accounting of the human health impacts of PVC across its lifecycle, including disposal issues and occupational exposure, finds that PVC leads to the release of dangerous quantities of dioxin and other carcinogens. The report authors found that, "When we add end of life with accidental landfill fires and backyard burning, the additional risk of dioxin emissions puts PVC consistently among the worst materials for human health impacts..."

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Nationwide Bans on PVC

Sweden first proposed restrictions on PVC use in 1995 and is working toward discontinuing all PVC uses. In Spain, over 60 cities have been declared PVC-free. Germany has banned the disposal of PVC in landfills as of 2005, is minimizing the incineration of PVC, and is encouraging the phase out of PVC products that cannot easily be recycled. Since 1986, at least 274 communities in Germany have enacted restrictions against PVC.

Bans on PVC Packaging

PVC packaging has been banned or restricted in a number of countries around the world, such as Canada, Spain, South Korea and the Czech Republic. Some U.S. cities such as Rahway, NJ and Glen Cove, NY have prohibited the use of PVC in food packaging or utensils. Legislation to ban PVC packaging has been introduced in California. 19 states have laws restricting heavy metals in packaging, which are often found in PVC packaging. A recent study found over 50% of all PVC packaging was contaminated with lead or cadmium. In 2009, legislation was introduced in the state of California to ban PVC packaging.

Hospitals Going PVC-Free

Over 100 healthcare institutions around the world are reducing or phasing out PVC and phthalates. Hospitals are particularly concerned as several government agencies, including the U.S. FDA, the Swedish Chemicals Inspectorate, the Japanese Ministry of Health and a Health Canada expert panel have warned that certain patients — particularly sick infants — are at risk of harm from phthalate-containing vinyl medical devices. Researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health have found that sick infants treated in neonatal intensive care units have high exposure levels to this reproductive toxicant. Fortunately, medical devices that do not contain vinyl plastic or phthalates are available for use — and many health care facilities are switching to these safer alternatives.

Doctors and Nurses Speak Out Against PVC and Phthalates

A number of major medical and nursing professional associations have expressed concern about the health risks associated with PVC medical devices. This includes the American Nurses Association, American Medical Association, American Public Health Association, the Massachusetts Medical Society, and many others. Visit http://noharm.org/us_canada/issues/toxins/pvc_phthalates/policies.php to view and download these policy statements and resolutions.

Investors Concerned About Financial, Legal and Reputational Risks

Many leading religious and socially responsible investors have expressed concern about the financial, legal and reputational risks associated with PVC. Some have even filed shareholder resolutions at companies regarding PVC. Resolutions have been filed by the Adrian Dominican Sisters, As You Sow Foundation, Camilla Madden Charitable Trust, Catholic Healthcare West, Domini Social Investments, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, Trillium Asset Management, and United Methodist Church Pension Board.

Leading Corporations Phasing Out PVC

In response to PVC's toxic lifecycle, many of the world's biggest Fortune 500 companies have committed to phase out PVC and switch to safe and healthy products. These include companies such as Apple, Honda, Johnson and Johnson, Kaiser Permanente, Microsoft, Nike, Sony, and Wal-Mart.

The following is a sampling of companies that have developed policies to reduce or phase out PVC.

Products	Companies
Athletic Shoemakers	Adidas, Asics, Nike, Puma
Automobile Interiors	Daimler Benz, Ford, General Motors, Honda, Toyota, Volkswagen, Volvo
Building Materials & Furnishings	Carnegie Fabrics (wall covering, upholstery), Firestone Building Products (roofing membranes), Herman Miller (office furniture), Milliken (carpet), Shaw (carpet)
Consumer Products & Packaging	Aveda, Body Shop, Bristol Myers, Crabtree & Evelyn, Estee Lauder, Helene Curtis, Hennes & Mauritz (H&M), Honest Teas, IKEA, Johnson and Johnson, Limited Brands (Victoria's Secret, Bath & Body Works), Microsoft, SC Johnson, Wal-Mart (private brands packaging)
Electronics	Apple, Hewlett Packard, Nokia, Samsung, Sharp, Sony
Food Packaging	Dean Milk Chug brand (food packaging), Eagle, Brand Cremora Brand (food packaging), Federated Groups (food packaging)
Healthcare	Abbott Laboratories, Baxter International, B. Braun, Catholic Healthcare West (I.V. Bags) Consorta, Kaiser Permanente, Tenet Healthcare Corporation
Retailers	Bed, Bath & Beyond, Best Buy, H&M, IKEA, JCPenneys, Kmart, Sears, Target, Toys "R" Us, Wal-Mart
Toys	Big Toys (playgrounds), Brio, Chicco, Early Start, First Years, Lamaze Infant Development, Lego Group, Little Tykes