

Greening of Consumer Products

an Allen Matkins
market intelligence
publication

Allen Matkins
attorneys at law

June 18, 2008

California sues 'Natural' companies over carcinogenic chemical was found in over 100 'organic' soaps

Environment News Service - June 10

California Attorney General Edmund G. Brown Jr. has filed a lawsuit against companies that manufacture or distribute body care and household cleaning products that have tested highest for the carcinogenic chemical 1,4-dioxane. A consumer advocacy group, Organic Consumers Association, has recently tested and discovered a cancer-causing chemical called 1,4-dioxane in nearly half of the 100 organic and natural soaps, shampoos, and other consumer products tested.

Government experts, lawmakers clash over the safety of BPA

Wall Street Journal - June 11

U.S. government experts and lawmakers clashed at a hearing over the safety of bisphenol A, or BPA, used in plastic baby bottles, as the science indicating health risks seemed not conclusive enough to meet the burden of proof required for a U.S. ban. The latest concern about BPA emerged when the Department of Health and Human Services' National Toxicology Program released a draft report concluding that small amounts of the chemical could be linked to health and developmental problems. The program's findings contradicted some earlier industry-funded animal studies that found minimal concern.

FDA official says plastic bottles containing bisphenol A are safe

redOrbit - June 11

A federal health official announced that plastic bottles containing bisphenol A are safe, responding to a previous report from the National Toxicology Program that noted "some concern" that the chemical can cause changes in brain behavior. Small amounts of the chemical compound can be released as plastics break down, according to Norris Alderson, the Food and Drug Administration's associate commissioner for science. But, he added, the level of exposure from these bottles was safe.

European Union's new chemical law to have global impact

Washington Post - June 12

Europe rolled out new restrictions on makers of chemicals linked to cancer and other health problems, changes that are forcing U.S. industries to find new ways to produce a wide range of everyday products. The new laws in the European Union require companies to demonstrate that a chemical is safe before it enters commerce -- the opposite of policies in the United States, where regulators must prove that a chemical is harmful before it can be restricted or removed from the market. Manufacturers say that complying with the European laws will add billions to their costs, possibly

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Eileen M. Nottoli
Editor

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driving up prices of some products.

Study finds vinyl shower curtains release 100 toxic chemicals

Canada.com - June 13

U.S. and Canadian environmental groups have issued a report that has identified that more than 100 different toxic chemicals are released into the air by shower curtains and shower curtain liners made with polyvinyl chloride (PVC). Since some of these chemicals are volatile, or airborne, they can be inhaled. The study by the U.S.-based Centre for Health, Environment and Justice was made public in Canada by the Environmental Defence and the Canadian Environmental Law Association. The Canadian groups are recommending the federal government ban PVC in shower curtains, expand labeling rules to help consumers avoid PVC in other products, declare some of the chemicals emitted from PVC as hazardous indoor air pollutants and regulate their use in consumer products.

California's Senate Budget Subcommittee to fund \$1 million biomonitoring program

California HealthLine - June 2

California's Senate Budget Subcommittee on Resources approved a measure to use about \$1 million in hazardous waste fees to fund the state's biomonitoring program. The program seeks to determine how people are affected by chemical exposure based on sampling and analysis of individuals' tissues and fluids. The Schwarzenegger administration's finance department objected to the proposal.

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