

Greening of Consumer Products

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Mattel to pay \$12 million to 39 states over lead-tainted toys

Consumer Affairs - Dec 15

Thirty-nine Attorneys General announced an agreement with Mattel, Inc. and Fisher Price, Inc. that will immediately reduce the lead content in children's toys. Under the agreement, the toy manufacturers will comply with future federally-mandated lead limit reductions ahead of schedule. The settlement resolves a 15-month investigation of the company's Fisher-Price subsidiary. The consent judgment requires Mattel to make a payment of \$12 million by January 30, 2009, to be divided among the participating states.

Industry urges government to ensure nanotech safety

Reuters - Dec 10

Fearing the emerging new field of nanotechnology will engender fears like those surrounding genetically modified foods in Europe, companies are pushing government agencies for a more coordinated effort to ensure the tiny nanomaterials are safe and environmentally friendly. BASF, which already makes sunscreens, construction chemicals and polymers that incorporate nanotechnology, has joined DuPont, the American Chemical Council and other industry groups in support of a newly released National Research Council report calling for improvements in the nation's efforts to ensure the safety of nanotech research.

EPA's chemical risk assessments lacking: report

RSC - Dec 11

A lack of resources is preventing the EPA from effectively performing chemical risk assessments, and the value of the assessments will diminish if things don't improve, according to a National Research Council report. EPA welcomed the report's release, calling the findings unsurprising. 'As science and research methodology changes and evolves over time, EPA expects to continue to update and change how we do conduct risk assessments,' agency spokesperson Suzanne Ackerman.

Fewer phthalates found in personal care products: report

USA Today - Dec 10

Companies are beginning to use fewer phthalates in personal care products including perfume and hair spray, according to a study from the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics. A 2002 study found that more than 70% of 72 products tested contained the chemicals; a new test of 12 perfumes, deodorants and hair sprays that previously had high phthalate levels showed that nine had eliminated or reduced levels of the chemical.

FDA to re-evaluate research on BPA and carry out new studies

The Associated Press - Dec 15

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Editor

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Federal health officials, criticized for declaring that a controversial chemical is safe, have refused to back down and instead plan more research. The Food and Drug Administration, in a letter to independent scientific reviewers, said it is re-evaluating its research on Bisphenol A and carrying out additional studies. The letter was the agency's initial response to an independent report that found deep flaws in the FDA's conclusion that the chemical used in food packaging is safe.

Canadian groups urge BPA ban in all food packaging

The Globe and Mail - Dec 16

Canada is the first country in the world to propose banning plastic baby bottles made from bisphenol A, but an influential coalition of public health and environmental advocates says the federal government hasn't gone far enough and should also protect pregnant women from the controversial chemical, according to The Globe & Mail. Groups want the government also to ban the chemical in all food packaging, including cans, based on worries that mothers are ingesting it through food and inadvertently exposing their fetuses.

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