

Veille Internet sur les phtalates du 3/10/2011 au 17/10/2011

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<i>La Commission européenne a proposé d'interdire la vente de produits qui viennent en contact avec la peau et qui contiennent du phtalate de DEHP, du DBP, du BBP et du DIBP à des concentrations supérieures à 0,1 %. Il est prévisible que l'interdiction européenne entraînera une action de la part des agences de sécurité sanitaires américaines pour réglementer ces quatre plastifiants.</i> | p3 |
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Detecting plasticisers in drinks

06 October 2011



The test can tell whether food or drink has been contaminated with toxic phthalates to levels of 0.5ppm, below the set safety limit of 1.5ppm

A simple red-to-purple colour change test could detect food or drinks contaminated with phthalates, say Chinese scientists. Phthalates are used as plasticisers in some types of plastic food packaging; however, due to their toxicity, there are strict rules to prevent them leaching into food or drinks, or being used directly as food additives. In spite of this, there have been several recent scandals where phthalates have entered the food chain.

The analytical test proposed by Bang-Ce Ye and his team from East China University of Science and Technology, Shanghai, uses gold nanoparticles modified with uridine 5'-triphosphate to detect the phthalates. In the presence of phthalates and Cu^{2+} , the modified gold nanoparticles are cross-linked together with the phthalates, forming a bridge between different nanoparticles. The cross-linking reaction causes aggregation of the nanoparticles and the distinctive red-to-purple colour change.

The team demonstrated that their test was capable of detecting whether drinks such as tea, juices or carbonated drinks had been contaminated with phthalates to a detection limit of 0.5ppm. 'The technique is capable of detecting phthalates in concentrations below those set in food safety limits [1.5ppm],' says Ye. Using a colour change as the indicator means there is no need for expensive and bulky detection equipment so the test could be used to carry out on-site inspections.

Juewen Liu, an expert in bioinorganic and analytical chemistry at the University of Waterloo, Canada, welcomed the research, saying: 'This is a beautiful example of combining the knowledge of coordination chemistry, supramolecular chemistry and nanoscience to solve an emerging analytical challenge.'

Russell Johnson

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European Commission’s Proposed Ban on Plasticizers Can Affect U.S. Market for Consumer Products

Thursday, October 13, 2011

The European Commission (EC) has proposed to ban the sale of products that come into contact with skin, and contain di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate (DEHP), di-n-butyl phthalates (DBP), benzyl butyl phthalate (BBP) and diisobutyl phthalate (DIBP) at concentrations greater than 0.1 percent (1,000 milligrams per kilogram, i.e., 1,000 parts per million (ppm)). These chemicals generally make certain kinds of plastics more flexible and are currently used in many consumer and other products. The ban would affect a wide variety of products, including childcare articles, purses, gloves, shoes, cosmetic cases, automobile interiors, wall and floor coverings, vinyl furniture, bags and briefcases, footwear, garden hoses, inflatable flotation devices, paints and varnishes.

Although such restrictions do not directly affect a U.S. manufacturer or supplier unless it imports these phthalates or products containing these phthalates into Europe, banning the use of these phthalates, as a practical matter, affects the U.S. market as well. For example, restrictions or bans on products containing certain chemicals in Europe, but not in the United States, presents difficult marketing problems.

First, domestic sales of these products may decline because of the public perception that a product that is too “dangerous” to be sold in Europe is equally unsafe in the United States.

Second, the personal injury bar could attempt to introduce the ban in Europe to confuse or prejudice a U.S. jury in personal injury cases, even though the ban is based on a precautionary principle rather than proof of actual injury.

Third, a ban in Europe is likely to be followed by U.S. regulatory action at least to restrict the use of these four phthalates. In fact, an expert panel selected by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is evaluating the safety of phthalates and may recommend that the CPSC expand the existing regulation of phthalates from children’s products to other products and other types of phthalates. Also, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is expected to initiate rulemaking under the Toxic Substances Control Act to regulate eight phthalates next year as part of its phthalate national chemical action plan. As a result, the need to reformulate products in the United States may occur in a relatively short period of time. Similarly, the more stringent regulation of phthalates in Europe may not only impact California’s Proposition 65 warning label requirements, but it may raise the priority of phthalates in the California Safer Consumer Products “green chemistry” program. As a result, the burden of proof is likely to shift from the regulatory agencies to manufacturers (and possibly distributors) to prove that high-priority chemicals such as phthalates are safe and that no alternative exists.

Therefore, it would be prudent for companies whose products contain phthalates to closely follow the U.S. federal and state regulatory activities concerning phthalates, consider commenting on any proposed regulations (either individually or through a trade group), and assess the feasibility and cost of reformulating these products.

William J. Walsh and AnnMarie Sanford

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<http://newsletter.sgs.com/eNewsletterPro/uploadedimages/000006/sgs-safeguards-18211-public-consultation-on-danish-proposal-to-restrict%20phthalates-en-11.pdf>

PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON DANISH PROPOSAL TO RESTRICT PHTHALATES

Récapitulatif par la société SGS du rapport Danois visant à interdire le DEHP, BBP, DBP et le DIBP avec une liste des produits susceptibles de contenir ces composés chimiques.

[\(document PDF, à voir directement sur le site\)](#)

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