

NEED FOR SPEED



You've heard a lot about them lately: toxic substances. In food, clothing, toys, packaging, electronics and construction materials. Developed and included in a product to serve a function. Yet really we know very little about them. Sometimes nothing. About their short and long term effects on our health – our bodies contain traces of literally hundreds of man-made chemicals – and on the environment.

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But we do know enough to understand that many of the chemicals in widespread use today are hazardous. They can, for example, cause cancer, disrupt hormonal systems or adversely affect reproductive functions. In fact, we have identified 267 such chemicals. But lack of awareness, slow legislative processes, resistance from the chemical industry and quite simply blind faith are preventing quick and effective action. What can be done? We can substitute hazardous chemicals with safer alternatives. And that's what the SIN (Substitute It Now) List is all about.

IT'S WITHIN REACH

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Momentum is building. And you could say it began in 2007. That's when the European Union's new policy on chemicals, REACH, was put into action. It's bold and progressive. Providing a real platform for regulating and restricting the use of the most hazardous substances, now known as Substances of Very High Concern. It also gives you, as a consumer or retailer, the Right to Know if a hazardous substance is present in a product. But it's not perfect. Why?

Because, like most political initiatives, it is slow and bureaucratic. Resources are limited. So the framework is now in place. But the chemicals are not. In the first phase, member states have only agreed to list 15 chemicals as Substances of Very High Concern. Just the first step in a long process. A drop in the ocean. This is where the SIN List comes in.

COMMON

6 SENSE

REALLY



Some might call it a wish list.

Others might see it as unnecessarily radical. We call it common sense. The SIN (Substitute It Now) List is based on commonly accepted scientific knowledge. No guesswork here. And it's doable

– it could (and should) be implemented tomorrow. The 267 chemicals on the list fulfil the official criteria for Substances of Very High Concern, as laid out in REACH. These chemicals are currently being used in everything from detergents and paints to computers and toys. Sometimes in high levels. Yet consumers have no knowledge of this. What are we waiting for?

The SIN List puts pressure on legislators to move forward with speed and urgency. It provides progressive retail companies with a helpful list of hazardous chemicals to avoid as they aim for a sustainable future. It also challenges certain chemical companies to shape up.

A CLOSER LOOK

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Here are just a few examples of the hazardous chemicals used in our daily lives right now. For the complete SIN List, go to: www.sinlist.org

Deca-BDE

Used in flame retardant in all kinds of electronic equipment, circuit boards, mobile phones and cables. Also common in textiles, insulation materials and floors. Reported to adversely affect the development of the unborn child and alter our hormonal system. This could in turn affect sexual function, fertility and the development of offspring. Found in human blood and breast milk, and in household dust, foods, freshwater, marine sediments, soil, air, birds' eggs, fish, marine animals, livestock, etc.

Bisphenol A

A stabilizer, hardener and anti-corrosive agent in plastic materials, used in baby bottles, food and drink containers, toys, computers, mobile phones, adhesives and paints. Classified as possibly toxic for reproduction, and as a substance that can alter the hormonal system. Also associated with increased cancer risk and chronic health problems – even from very low

levels of exposure. Found in human tissue and blood, and in rivers, lakes, sediments, air and dust.

DEHP

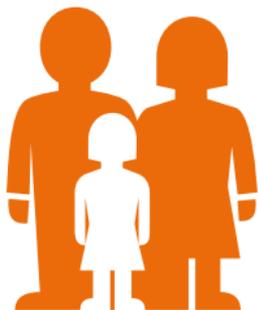
Used as plasticizer in clothes, shoe soles, artificial leather, rubber, garden hoses, wires, cables, and floorings. Proven to be toxic for reproduction, since it adversely affects sexual function, fertility and the development of offspring. It is also one of the few substances to be included on the first REACH candidate list. Found in human blood, urine and breast milk, also found in meat and dairy products, as well as in air.

PFOA

Water and oil repellent coating and surfactant used in non-stick kitchenware, carpets, furniture and clothing, shampoo, cleaning products and floor polishes. Reported to cause cancer and reproductive dysfunction. As a so-called persistent and bioaccumulative chemical, it does not degrade or break down in nature or in the body, but accumulates. Found in human blood and breast milk, and in polar bears, birds, fish, in drinking water, surface water and household dust.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

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RETAIL COMPANIES: Ask your suppliers about the chemicals used in your products. If a chemical is on the SIN List, then ask them to use a safer alternative – or find a supplier who will.

AUTHORITIES/LEGISLATORS/POLITICIANS: Learn more about the SIN List and why it is important. Push for SIN List substances in the regulatory process. Set an example. Support it. Fight for it. Implement it. There is no reason to wait.

CHEMICAL COMPANIES: Become a progressive leader in innovation. Develop safer alternatives to the chemicals on the SIN List – and sharpen your competitive edge.

IT'S

¹² HAPPENING

NOW



The REACH SIN list is a prime source of information about substances of concern that B&Q will use to ensure that it protects its customers, employees and the environment. In addition, it will provide an early warning system for substances that are likely to appear on the official REACH 'candidate list', enabling B&Q to move towards elimination/substitution of these chemicals in advance of legislation.

*Roy Miller, Chemicals Advisor,
B&Q Social Responsibility*

SARA LEE

Sara Lee has initiated a Critical Ingredients Program (CIP) across all household and body care product categories. It involves constant and systematic reviews of various ingredients and combinations of ingredients used in manufacturing. It has led, for example, to the substitution of certain musk substances in fragrance products. Sara Lee sees the SIN List as a natural fit to its CIP program which helps the program grow.

SONY ERICSON

Substitution – it's all in the design. Sony Ericsson Mobile Communications actively works together with suppliers of components to find out if and where substances of concern are used in their products, so that these substances can be phased out. The substitution of SIN chemicals such as phthalates and brominated flame retardants are good examples.

SKANSKA

Within the construction industry, Skanska is publicly advocating for increased transparency and disclosure of the chemicals contained in construction materials. Skanska is in its collaboration with ChemSec and the ChemSec Business Group actively pushing the chemicals policy agenda through e.g. encouraging implementation of the SIN List. Through continuously updating its own voluntary chemical restrictions lists, Skanska aims at limiting the use of hazardous substances such as SIN chemicals in its projects when a sustainable commercially available alternative exists.

KNOW MORE

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For more information about the SIN (Substitute It Now) List, go to:
www.sinlist.org.

To learn more about ChemSec we welcome you to visit: **www.chemsec.org**.

ChemSec is a non-profit organisation committed to working toward a toxic-free world. In addition to developing the SIN List, we are actively involved in monitoring the progress of the REACH legislative process. We also work with progressive, multinational companies to show that substituting hazardous chemicals with safer alternatives is both scientifically and economically feasible.

What drives us? The five main principles of REACH:

- The Precautionary Principle
- The Polluter Pays Principle
- The Right to Know
- The Substitution Principle
- No Data – No Market

Common sense really.

Substitute It Now!

The SIN (Substitute It Now) List of hazardous chemicals is based on the criteria for Substances of Very High Concern as laid down in REACH. It was developed by ChemSec, The International Chemical Secretariat, in close collaboration with an NGO Advisory Committee consisting of:

- The Center for International Environmental Law
- European Environmental Bureau
- Greenpeace European Unit
- Instituto Sindical de Trabajo Ambiente y Salud
- WWF European Policy Office
- The European Consumers' Organisation
- Friends of the Earth Europe
- The Health and Environmental Alliance
- Women in Europe for a Common Future

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