

Chlorinated Phosphate Flame Retardants Fact Sheet

Chlorinated phosphate flame retardants are one type of organophosphate flame retardant. They have been added to a variety of products, such as foam used in upholstered furniture, building materials, some fabrics, and children’s products.

Chlorinated phosphate flame retardants are found in

- Polyurethane foam in a variety of products, including:
 - Upholstered furniture in homes and offices.
 - Some car seats for infants and children.
 - Motor vehicle seats, carpet padding, and foam blocks at gymnastic studios.
- Some building materials, such as insulation and plastic pipes.
- Some fabrics used in curtains, costumes, and camping tents.
- Some children’s products made from plastic, foam, or synthetic rubber, such as soft toys and arts and crafts supplies.
- Paints, varnishes, and adhesives.
- Dust in homes, offices, and cars that contain products with these flame retardants.

Possible health concerns

Scientists are still studying how chlorinated phosphate flame retardants may affect people’s health. Some chlorinated phosphates:

- May interfere with the body’s natural hormones.
- May decrease fertility.
- May affect the developing fetus.
- May increase cancer risk.

Possible ways to reduce exposure

- Because these flame retardants can come out of products and collect in dust:
 - Wash your and your child’s hands often, especially before preparing or eating food.
 - Clean your floors regularly, using a wet mop or HEPA vacuum cleaner if possible, and use a damp cloth to dust.
- Look for furniture that has “TB117-2013” labels, the new California flammability standard that can be met without using chemical flame retardants. The label should indicate if the furniture contains flame retardants or not.
- Avoid new and used furniture with “TB-117” labels, which is more likely to contain chemical flame retardants.
- Ask for children’s products that do not contain flame retardants. Contact the manufacturer if the seller is unsure whether a product contains flame retardants.
- Replace upholstered furniture that is torn or has crumbling foam.
- If you install new carpet, avoid using padding made from recycled or scrap foam.