

Debate on banning organohalogen flame retardants heats up

September 26 2018

Hundreds of everyday household items, from laptop computers to babies' high chairs, contain flame retardants to prevent the objects from catching fire. Recently, several groups petitioned a U.S. agency to ban flame retardants known as organohalogens, some of which can migrate out of household items. Others argue against blacklisting an entire class of compounds without further study, according to an article in *Chemical & Engineering News*.

Organohalogens are a group of chemicals that includes brominated or chlorinated phosphate esters, Senior Correspondent Cheryl Hogue writes. Scientists have linked some of these compounds to health concerns such as endocrine disruption, reproductive problems, cancer and developmental defects. Therefore, several health and environmental groups petitioned the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to ban four types of household goods containing organohalogens: children's products, except car seats; residential furniture; mattresses and mattress pads; and electronics casings. Meanwhile, manufacturers of flame retardants and electronics have argued against lumping all organohalogens, which have different properties and toxicities, together as a class.

To gain clarity on this issue, CPSC is turning to the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering & Medicine for advice. A newly formed [flame retardants](#) committee will help the agency determine whether to consider all organohalogens as a single class, or whether they should be broken into subclasses for regulation. In addition, CSPEC is establishing a

Chronic Hazard Advisory Panel of outside scientific experts to review the scientific data on organohalogen toxicity and exposure. The conclusions reached by these groups could have broad regulatory repercussions, Hogue writes.

More information: *Chemical & Engineering News*,
[cen.acs.org/safety/consumer-sa ... halogen-flame/96/i38](https://cen.acs.org/safety/consumer-safety/organohalogen-flame-retardants/96/i38)

Provided by American Chemical Society

Citation: Debate on banning organohalogen flame retardants heats up (2018, September 26)
retrieved 15 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2018-09-debate-organohalogen-flame-retardants.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--