

Chemicals in Household Products - what the manufacturers told us

The Safer Chemicals Campaign

Thousands of man-made chemicals are used in the products we buy every day. More and more research is suggesting that many of these chemicals could be a danger to our health. Friends of the Earth's (FOE's) Safer Chemicals Campaign is targeting politicians both at a UK and a European level for better regulations so that potentially risky chemicals are replaced with safer alternatives.

The Campaign is also targeting manufacturers and retailers of household products, to find out what they are doing to eliminate risky chemicals from the products they make and/or sell. By making this information available to the public in the form of Shoppers' Updates, we want to encourage companies to face up to the issue of chemicals in their products. Since this work began in 2000, several major companies have instituted chemicals programmes (e.g. Marks and Spencer, Homebase, B&Q and Mothercare). More details can be found on our website: www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/safer_chemicals/issues/cutting_the_risk/

The Research

In Spring 2001, FOE supporters were asked to help the Safer Chemicals Campaign by writing to the manufacturers of their favoured household products. The aim of this research was to obtain information about the presence of risky chemicals in specific products, in order to help people make informed choices about the products they buy.

The products we were most interested in obtaining information about were soap, hair gel and mousse, deodorant, shaving foam/gel/oil, perfumes, hand creme and body lotion, moisturiser, furniture polish, kitchen and bath cleaners and paint. Manufacturers were asked to reveal whether specific products were free from five risky chemicals that are known to either build up in the body or have an impact on the hormone system. These chemicals are:

- Alkylphenols
 - Alkyltin
 - Artificial Musks
 - Bisphenol A
 - Phthalates
- More information on these risky chemicals is available in our factsheets: www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/safer_chemicals/resource/general_readers.html

The Findings

Over 250 responses from household product manufacturers were forwarded to the Safer Chemicals Campaign by FOE supporters. The way in which manufacturers responded and the usefulness of the information they provided varied enormously, from clear answers about the presence of the risky chemicals in specific products to vague standard letters providing no information about individual chemicals or products. The responses have been useful in revealing both what companies think of consumers' right to know, as well as giving us information on which products are free from risky chemicals.

The tables below contain the results. Table 1 lists the manufacturers of products that are free from all of the risky chemicals listed above (according to the companies themselves - we cannot verify this information). Table 2 lists all the other manufacturers we received replies from i.e. those who gave a vague, unspecific response and those who revealed that the products they were asked about do contain one or more of the risky chemicals listed.

Table 1 Products free from all the target chemicals (based on the companies' responses only)

COMPANY	PRODUCT
Accantia	All SIMPLE products (eg. soap, eye make-up remover)
Akzo Noble	Solo Satin Paint Solo Mid Sheen Paint
Astonish	Foaming Scourer Paste Cleaner
Boots	Skin Kindly Rich Moisturising Cream Fragrance Free Moisturising Cream 24 hr Protection Unperfumed anti-perspirant Deodorant No. 7 Essential Moisturising Cream No. 7 Positive Action Day and Night Eyecare Boots range of Soapflakes & Fabric Conditioner Domestic Borax Salon System Fixing Spritz
Bristol Myers	MUM anti- perspirant deodorant
Crookes Healthcare	E45 range (eg. E45 Shower Cream, E45 Moisturising Cream)
Dax	Dax Wave & Groom
Dermal Laboratories	Dermal 500 Lotion
Dylon	Lord Sheraton products (eg. Leather Balsam, Pure Beeswax Balsam, Caretaker)
Estee Lauder	Dramatically Different Moisturising Lotion Clarifying Lotions - Mild, 2, 3, and 4 Facial Soaps - Extra Mild, Mild, Extra Strength Skin calming Moisture Mask Exfoliating Scrub Different Lipstick Long Lasting Lipstick Moisture Surge Lipstick Supermascara Naturally Glossy Mascara Gentle Waterproof Mascara Full Potential Mascara Quick Eyes Eye Shading Pencil Quickliner for Eyes
Focus Do It All	Non-drip gloss (paint)
Health & Beauty Solutions	Original Source Products (e.g. Shampoos, Shower Gels)
KTC (Edibles) Ltd	Creamed Coconut
Molton Brown	All products
Procter & Gamble	Flash
Revlon	Dry Skin Relief Body Lotion - Fragrance Free
Reylon	Some mattresses are free from Brominated Flame Retardants, depending on the fabric, but they do not specify which mattresses this applies to
Sanmex International	Charm Multi-Surface Polish
Umberto Giannini	Gunk Stay Put Jelly (Hair product)
Waitrose	Pure Vegetable Oil Soap
Woolworths	Cover Plus Matt Paint

Table 2. Products that either contain one or more target chemicals, or for which the companies did not offer an adequate explanation

COMPANY	PRODUCT
Alberto Culver	Alberto VO5 Shampoo
Avon	Avon Cosmetics (eg. Avon's Intense Moisture Hand Cream)
Bayer	Adalat LA 20
Beiersdorf	Nivea, Atrixo
Bison int.	Did not provide information on individual products
The Body Shop	Did not provide information on individual products
Brodie & Stone int.	Did not provide information on individual products
Bronnley	Did not provide information on individual products
Boots	Boots Soltan Oil of Evening Primrose Moisture Cream Coconut Shampoo
Co-operative Group	Did not provide information on individual products
Coty UK	Healing Garden Jasmine Sensations, Mellow Musk
Creightons	Blond e Styling Mousse
Cussons	Mild Cream Soap, 1001 range, Imperial Leather products, Pearl Soap, Carex Handwash
Dicom	Remo Cream Cleaner
Ecover	Did not provide information on individual products
Elida Faberge (now Lever Fabergé)	Sure deodorant, Vaseline Intensive Care products, other products
Elizabeth Arden	Deep Cleansing Lotion Ceramide Firm Lift
Ellisons	Did not provide information on individual products
Gaelle Int.	John Frieda products (eg. Frizz-Ease, Sheer Blonde, ready to wear)
Gillette Group UK	Right Guard Anti-perspirant
Heinz	Did not provide information on individual products
ICI	Paints
Jeyes	Did not provide information on individual products
Joico	I.C.E. Sculpting Lotion Kerapro Conditioning Shampoo ALTime Moisturising Conditioner
Johnson	Did not provide information on individual products
Lever Brothers (now Lever Fabergé)	Lynx Deodorants
Lidl	Did not provide information on individual products
L'Oreal	Did not provide information on individual products
Marks&Spencer	Did not provide information on individual products
Morrisons	Did not provide information on individual products

COMPANY	PRODUCT
Martha hill	Did not provide information on individual products
Natural collection	Did not provide information on individual products
Nicky Clarke	Hairomatherapy Thickening Mousse
Novartis	Did not provide information on individual products
Pears	Did not provide information on individual products
Prestige Collections	Parfum Lavin
Procter & Gamble	Oil of Olay, Max Factor, Secret products
Reabrook ltd	Tesol Fabric Deodoriser
Reckitt Benckiser	Mr Sheen
Revlon	Dry Skin Relief Body Lotion - Original Dry Skin Relief Body Lotion - Intensive Dry Skin Relief Replenishing Body Moisturiser
Sainsburys	Did not provide information on individual products
Sealy	Did not provide information on individual products
Slumberland	Did not provide information on individual products
Smart Buy	Gold Concentrate Ampoules
Statestrong	Did not provide information on individual products
Tesco	Did not provide information on individual products
Tigi	Haircare Products
Thornton & Ross	Zoflora disinfectant
Wella	Did not provide information on individual products
Whole earth	Did not provide information on individual products
Wilkinson	Did not provide information on individual products
Woods of Windsor	Gardeners protective Barrier Handcream

For more information on the Safer Chemicals Campaign see our website:

www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/safer_chemicals/

To take action for better regulation of chemicals in products see:

www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/safer_chemicals/press_for_change/

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