



## MPIRG is Working to Protect Your Children's Health

There are currently over 80,000 chemicals that are used in the manufacturing and production of our daily products, and fewer than 200 have been tested for potential health effects. Minnesotans are involuntarily exposed to toxic chemicals in everyday consumer products, including: plastics, toys, baby bottles, pacifiers, water bottles, shower curtains, cosmetics, and more. Some of the chemicals used in these products can leach where they don't belong, into our bodies.

### Why Children's Products?

**Children are particularly vulnerable because they put plastics in their mouths – sippy cups, pacifiers and toys. Additionally, their bodies have immature detoxification systems and are not as well able to detoxify any toxins that they come into contact with.**



#### Chemical Profile: Bisphenol-A (BPA)

- BPA is found in hard and soft water bottles, baby bottles and soda cans
- This chemical is a hormone disruptor, mimicking the hormone estrogen
- Heating plastic causes BPA to leach into the fluid, for example heating milk in a baby bottle
- Health effects include: increased hyperactivity, impaired learning in children, increased aggression, increased susceptibility to drug addiction, decreased maternal instincts in women, increased level of diabetes and obesity, early puberty in girls, and lowered sperm count in males
- 95% of Americans tested have BPA in their in their bodies

**Chemical Profile:  
Phthalates**

- Found in vinyl plastic, it acts as a softening agent and binds fragrances to products
- Uses include shower curtains, vinyl toys, food packaging, plastic wrap, shampoo, nail polish, building materials, and the new car smell of a car
- Phthalates are linked to cancer, birth defects, reproductive disorders and hormone disruption
- Population studies show that virtually all people carry some level of phthalates in their bodies

# What can we do?

## Support Protective Policies

- Minnesota must take a lead on passing policies that ban these chemicals from consumer products and support safer alternatives.
- MPIRG is working with City Council members across the state to pass City Council ordinances banning the sale of any products specifically designed for children 3 years old and younger containing BPA or phthalates.
- MPIRG and the Healthy Legacy Coalition are lobbying to pass a statewide ban of BPA and phthalates in baby products, with the hopes of establishing a statewide regulatory system for toxic chemicals.

## Encourage Corporate Responsibility

The Healthy Legacy Coalition is working with local business to urge and foster smart business leadership.

## Promote Consumer Education

MPIRG is educating the public so they know how to make better decisions when going to the store. Until comprehensive policy change occurs, we have the power to influence markets!

## What You Can Do

Contact your City Council Member and elected officials to voice your concerns about toxic chemicals. Ask for immediate action on phasing out BPA and phthalates from children's products. Visit the MPIRG website for sample letters and links to related sites.

## Questions? Please call!

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