

## Consumers to Get More Information about the Chemicals Used in Cleaning Products – Additional Information Still Needed

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The supermarket aisle is flooded with cleaning products that contain chemicals that scientists have linked to serious health problems, such as asthma, fertility problems, even birth defects. Even worse, consumers often have no way of knowing how to avoid these chemicals, because no U.S. company is required to list all of their ingredients on the label.

The Consumer Specialty Products Association (CSPA) and the Soap and Detergent Association (SDA), the trade industry groups representing cleaning product makers, have announced that manufacturers of cleaning products, air care products, and automotive care products will begin to voluntarily disclose some of the ingredients they use in their products to consumers in 2010.

In light of this positive step forward, the industry as a whole still has a ways to go. Here's how the industry can improve on its efforts.

<b>The plan encourages companies to disclose all intentionally-added ingredients in a product except for the ingredients that make up preservatives, dyes and fragrances (perfumes). They can be listed simply as “preservatives”, “dyes”, and “fragrance”.</b>	
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<p><b>Problem:</b> Listing “preservatives,” “dyes,” and “fragrances” as such does not disclose the chemicals that are contained within those categories.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i> Parabens are widely used as <b>preservatives</b> in cleaning products. Parabens have been associated with several health risks, including hormone disruption and breast cancer.</p> <p>Phthalates are a common carrier for <b>fragrances</b> in cleaning products. Phthalates have been linked to reproductive problems in men and asthma in children.</p>	<p><b>Solution:</b> Companies should disclose all ingredients used in their products, including the constituents of dyes, preservatives, and fragrances.</p> <p>They should help consumers understand the purpose for the chemicals by revealing its functional name along with the scientific name.</p> <p>In addition, companies should provide hazard warnings for any chemicals that are known or suspected carcinogens, reproductive toxins, or allergens.</p>
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<b>The plan only encourages companies to disclose intentionally-added ingredients.</b>	
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<p><b>Problem:</b> There are chemicals that can be created either by the mixture of ingredients, or during the manufacturing process of a product. While these chemicals are not "intentionally added ingredients" they are detectable in the final</p>	<p><b>Solution:</b> Chemicals such as this should be disclosed to the consumer so that they can be avoided. The manufacturer has a responsibility not only for disclosing the ingredients used, but also for disclosing the ingredients that are present in the</p>
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<p>product and consumers will be exposed to them.</p> <p>A recent example of this is 1,4 dioxane, a probable human carcinogen, which has been detected in numerous personal care products such as baby shampoo and bubble bath. It is not added to these products, but rather is created during the manufacture.</p>	<p>final product used by the customer.</p>
<p><b>The plan gives companies the choice to disclose the ingredients on the company's website, OR on the product label, OR through the company's toll-free number, OR by other non-electronic means.</b></p>	
<p><b>Problem:</b></p> <p>Consumers should have a consistent method of identifying the chemicals in the products they buy. Allowing companies to choose their method of identification does not allow consumers to easily and effectively compare products. In addition, it creates confusion for the consumer.</p>	<p><b>Solution:</b></p> <p>Companies should list the ingredients in their products on the product label to give consumers choices at the point of purchase AND on the company website to ensure that all consumers can access the information they desire.</p>
<p><b>The plan allows ingredients to be identified by any of the following naming systems: International Nomenclature of Cosmetic Ingredients (INCI) name, and/or International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) name, and/or Chemical Abstract Service (CAS) name, and/or Common chemical name.</b></p>	
<p><b>Problem:</b></p> <p>Consumers need consistent names to make smart choices easily—when different companies use different chemical names, it puts up a barrier for consumers. Putting the ingredients on the label allows consumers to identify chemicals of concern before purchasing a product. Likewise, having the information on a website allows consumers to search for more information about the chemicals contained in that product. In addition, companies should make the information available in both English and Spanish.</p>	<p><b>Solution:</b></p> <p>Companies should aim for international consistency by following existing EU regulations (EU Detergent Directive). Companies should always list ingredients by the INCI name or IUPAC name. As a last result, if no other name is available, companies may list the common chemical name. Companies should follow the chemical name with the functional name in parentheses to help consumer understand why a chemical is present in that product. On the website, the company should list the CAS number as well. This is a unique number and will ensure there is no confusion about what the chemical is. With the CAS number, consumers can search for information about the chemicals.</p>
<p><b>The plan is only voluntary. Companies don't have to follow it, and there is no penalty if they don't or encouragement to do so.</b></p>	
<p><b>Problem:</b></p> <p>Companies have the option to participate or not</p>	<p><b>Solution:</b></p> <p>The CSPA should work to implement a</p>

in the program. This means consumers will not receive the information they need on all of their products.	mandatory labeling program through federal legislation.
<b>The plan doesn't go into effect until January 1, 2010.</b>	
<b>Problem:</b> Consumers don't get the information they need until 2010!	<b>Solution:</b> Companies should make a good-faith effort to get consumers this information as soon as possible. They can start by disclosing the ingredients on a website by July 1, 2009. This allows them six months. Right now, companies that are selling products in the European Union are already required to disclose their ingredients on a website, so this is not an extra burden.