

Protect Yourself From Toxics in Thermal Paper

What's the problem?

Bisphenols are chemicals found in common products like water bottles and thermal paper cash register receipts. They may cause negative health impacts.

People who come in frequent contact with thermal paper, like cashiers and customers, are most at risk. The Washington Department of Ecology will provide up to \$1000 to qualifying businesses that stop using bisphenol receipts. Contact your [Pollution Prevention Specialist](#)¹ for more information.

¹ ecology.wa.gov/PPA



What can you do?

There are several actions you can take to reduce exposure to bisphenols for customers and staff. First, contact your receipt supplier, the manufacturer, or check the packaging materials to determine if your receipts have bisphenols. If they do, follow these guidelines:

1. Go paperless

Eliminate thermal paper receipts. Switch to digital e-receipts. If you can't use e-receipts, use bisphenol-free paper.

2. Avoid handing out receipts

Asking customers if they need a receipt before printing one can cut your thermal paper use by around 30 percent.

3. Handle receipts as little as possible

Offer your staff protective, food-grade silicone fingertips or gloves to wear when handling receipts.

4. Protect high-risk populations

Reduce exposure to bisphenols in high-risk populations such as children and pregnant or nursing people.

5. Never recycle or compost receipts

The chemicals in thermal paper can end up in wastewater when receipts are recycled or composted. Follow state regulations for disposal. Some bisphenol-containing thermal receipt paper may designate as dangerous waste in the state of Washington.

Are there alternatives?

Go paperless or use bisphenol-free paper. There are several replacements for thermal receipt paper that do not contain bisphenols. Search for thermal paper labeled as “bisphenol free” or “phenol free.” Paper marketed as “BPA-free” may still contain bisphenols.

Publication information

Publication: 23-04-011

Revised March 2024


Accommodation requests


To request an ADA accommodation, contact Ecology at 360-407-6700 or hwtrpubs@ecy.wa.gov, or visit ecology.wa.gov/accessibility. For Relay Service or TTY, call 711 or 877-833-6341.



Find out more

Ethan Bean

 (509) 425-2300

 ethan.bean@ecy.wa.gov

 ecology.wa.gov/ProductReplacement

