



Toxics in Our Products



Thanks to Safer Products for Washington, toxic chemicals are already restricted in [15 product categories](#)¹ like apparel, drink cans, and cleaning products. Manufacturers report to us when they use toxic chemicals in [13 other categories](#),² like shoes, food cans, and kitchen supplies. This helps us learn more about chemicals in products and promotes greater ingredient transparency.

What is Safer Products for Washington?

Consumer products should be safer for people and the environment.

Washington's Safer Products for Washington program works to make that a reality. Our program identifies harmful chemicals, looks for safer alternatives, and works to adopt regulations that restrict toxic chemicals in consumer products.

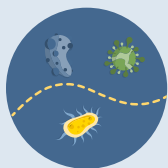
What are some of the health impacts of toxic chemicals in consumer products?

Safer Products for Washington prioritizes chemicals that are associated with health impacts to:



Cancer risk

Exposure to some chemicals can increase the risk of cancer.



The immune system

Our immune system protects us from harmful bacteria and viruses. When a chemical interferes with our immune system, it can make it easier for us to get sick and harder for us to recover.



The endocrine system

The endocrine system works to regulate hormones in the body. Exposure to certain chemicals can affect hormones that impact our reproductive health and fertility, nervous system development, and obesity risks.



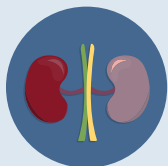
Development

Certain chemicals can slow down the growth and development of infants and children.



Reproduction

Some chemicals can harm our ability to have healthy children.



Kidney function

Kidneys help remove waste from our blood. Some chemicals can damage our kidneys or impact how they work. Damaged kidneys can cause increased blood pressure and increased diabetes risk.



Nervous system

The nervous system coordinates body movements through our nerves and brain. Chemicals can damage or injure the nervous system and cause health problems.

Product lifecycles

Our personal choices to use safer products can reduce some exposure to toxic chemicals. However, if these chemicals continue to be produced and sold, you might still come into contact with them.

Consumer products have a “lifecycle” that includes three phases: manufacturing, use, and disposal.



Manufacturing

People may be exposed to harmful chemicals when these products are made and if they live near facilities that produce them.

Use

Harmful chemicals can enter our bodies when we breathe them in, touch them, or swallow them by mistake.

As our household products break down, the chemicals in them build up in dust and air, creating new pathways for exposure. Some of the products we wash down the drain also contain toxic chemicals that could pollute the environment and can't be removed through wastewater treatment.



Disposal

When a product is thrown away, whether entirely used or expired, it can break down and release toxic chemicals in landfills, waterways, and air.

These chemicals can attach to dirt, soil, and sediment. Some end up in the environment, where they affect wildlife and become part of their food sources.



Regulations address harmful chemicals

Regulations create requirements for manufacturers to stop using harmful chemicals.

Restrictions on toxic chemicals in products encourage industry to switch to alternatives to make products that are safer for people and the environment.

Effective alternatives

Manufacturers continue to innovate and find safer and effective alternatives to replace toxic chemicals in products.

Public involvement

Make your voice heard. Participate in government processes, including:

- Writing to your representatives.
- Tuning in to government agency webinars.
- Sharing comments with the State Legislature.



Regulations take time. What can I do to protect myself now?

Check out our [healthy home tips](#)³ and reduce your exposure to toxic chemicals at home.

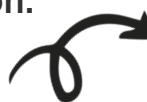
To get involved with Safer Products for Washington:



Sign up for our [email list](#).⁴ We share program updates, including publications, outreach information, and events.



Submit [public comments](#).⁵ Ecology reviews every comment and keeps them as part of the public record.



Related information



Learn about the [Safer Products for Washington](#)⁶ law.



[Shop for safer products](#)⁷ at the store.



Learn more about what we're doing to [reduce toxic chemicals](#)⁸ in consumer products.

Endnotes

- 1 <https://ecology.wa.gov/waste-toxics/reducing-toxic-chemicals/washingtons-toxics-in-products-laws/safer-products/compliance-and-reporting#restricted>
- 2 <https://ecology.wa.gov/waste-toxics/reducing-toxic-chemicals/washingtons-toxics-in-products-laws/safer-products/compliance-and-reporting#reporting>
- 3 <https://ecology.wa.gov/waste-toxics/community-waste-toxics/at-home/healthy-home-guide>
- 4 <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WAECY/signup/40160>
- 5 <https://hwtr.ecology.commentinput.com/comment/landingPage?lang=en>
- 6 <https://ecology.wa.gov/SPWA>
- 7 <https://ecology.wa.gov/waste-toxics/community-waste-toxics/at-home/shop-for-safer-products>
- 8 <https://ecology.wa.gov/waste-toxics/community-waste-toxics/at-home>

ADA accessibility and language services

To request an ADA accommodation, email HWTRPubs@ecy.wa.gov, call (360) 407-6700, or dial 711 for relay services. Visit ecology.wa.gov/ADA for more information.

A translated copy of these materials may be available in other languages at no cost. To request it, please email: SaferProductsWA@ecy.wa.gov.

