



# Clark Seif Clark Environmental Newsletter

[www.csceng.com](http://www.csceng.com) 800.807.1118

June 2013



Every day, Clark Seif Clark professionals are deployed across the nation helping both large and small customers resolve health & safety, industrial hygiene, environmental and indoor air quality issues.

At a moment's notice, Clark Seif Clark can send their experts anywhere they are needed. No matter if it's in response to a hurricane, wildfire, flood, tornado, or other natural disaster, Clark Seif Clark is ready to help and can respond in no time at all.

## New Rules Regarding Formaldehyde Proposed by the EPA

Last month, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed two rules to help protect Americans from exposure to formaldehyde. These proposed rules are meant to ensure that composite wood products produced domestically or imported into the United States meet the formaldehyde emission standards established by Congress.

"The proposed regulations announced today reflect EPA's continued efforts to protect the public from exposure to harmful chemicals in their daily lives," said James J. Jones, EPA's acting assistant administrator for the Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention. "Once final, the rules will reduce the public's exposure to this harmful chemical found in many products in our homes and workplaces."

The first proposed new rule would limit how much formaldehyde may be emitted from hardwood plywood, medium-density fiberboard, particleboard and finished goods, that are sold, supplied, offered for sale, manufactured, or imported in the United States. The second rule would establish a third-party certification framework designed to ensure that manufacturers of composite wood products meet the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) formaldehyde emission standards by having their composite wood products certified through an accredited third-party certifier.

The month before, the California Environmental Protection

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Clark Seif Clark  
(CSC)

[csc@csceng.com](mailto:csc@csceng.com)  
800.807.1118

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Agency's Air Resources Board (ARB) posted a new online document about reducing formaldehyde emissions from composite wood products and health effects due to exposure. It stated, "Health effects can include nose and throat irritation, a burning sensation of the eyes, wheezing, difficulty in breathing, and can trigger asthma symptoms in those with asthma. Sensitive individuals may experience fatigue, headache, and nausea. Formaldehyde is also a known human carcinogen."

One company that has been on the forefront of protecting people at work and in their homes from exposure to elevated levels of formaldehyde is Clark Seif Clark. "A number of building materials, furnishing, consumer products and workplace activities can expose people to elevated levels of formaldehyde," reported Franco Seif, President of Clark Seif Clark (CSC), a leading indoor environmental quality consulting firm. "CSC provides testing and consulting services to identify and resolve cases of formaldehyde exposure."

To learn more about testing for formaldehyde or other indoor environmental concerns, please visit Clark Seif Clark at [www.csceng.com](http://www.csceng.com), email [csc@csceng.com](mailto:csc@csceng.com) or call (800) 807-1118.

## Flame Retardants under Scrutiny Once Again

Recently, concerns over flame retardants and their ongoing impact in young children were in the news once again. The topic was under the spotlight after researchers studied several hundred pregnant women looking for polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) in blood samples. They found that elevated levels of PBDEs correlated with childhood behavior and learning challenges.

PBDEs include a number of commercial versions of the materials. In 2004, the United States phased out the manufacture and import of several of them. "PBDEs are not chemically bound to plastics, foam, fabrics, or other products in which they are used, making them more likely to leach out of these products," reports the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The agency also states, "EPA is concerned that certain PBDE congeners are persistent, bioaccumulative, and toxic to both humans and the environment. The critical endpoint of concern for human health is neurobehavioral effects."

PBDEs are not the only flame retardants under recent scrutiny. In March, California's Governor released draft language for new fire safety regulations. TB 117-2013 was posted for a 45 day public comment period as it aims to improve fire safety without the use of potentially dangerous flame retardant chemicals. Chlorinated Tris, also known as TDCPP, is one of these chemicals currently used as a flame retardant. It can be found as an additive in polyurethane foams, resins, plastics, textile coatings and rubber. Chlorinated Tris has been in use since the 1960s, its use in children's pajamas was banned in the late 1970s due to concerns

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**Is It Safe?**

over its mutagenic properties.

Some of these chemicals are still being found almost a decade after their use was banned. Clark Seif Clark provides testing and consulting services to help prevent exposure to flame retardants that could be causing health concerns.

CSC recently sponsored an educational video about health risks due to exposure to chlorinated Tris that can be seen at:



Chlorinated Tris (TDCPP): Flame Retardants and Baby Products

To learn more about testing for flame retardants or other health and safety issues, please visit [www.csceng.com](http://www.csceng.com), email [csc@csceng.com](mailto:csc@csceng.com) or call (800) 807-1118.

**About Clark Seif Clark:** CSC was established in 1989 to help clients in both the public and private sectors address environmental issues. CSC is a leading provider of these services with multiple offices along the western seaboard and southwest. The company believes in science-based protocols and has a strong background in engineering making them the preferred environmental consultants to healthcare facilities, architects, schools, builders, contractors, developers and real estate professionals.