



Testing By Consumer Group Finds Continued Presence of BPA in Can Linings

OEHHA, PRODUCTS OF INTEREST, STUDIES, REPORTS, TESTING

By ROGER PEARSON, July 17, 2017

The Oakland-based Center for Environmental Health (CEH) has **released a report**¹⁾ concluding that the controversial chemical Bisphenol A (BPA) is still widely present in can linings in the U.S. That conclusion is based on testing done by CEH in four major supermarket chains located in eleven states.

BPA has long been used as a preservative in linings of cans containing various foods. The chemical has been suspected for some time as being linked to birth defects and to some cancers. Health groups have agitated for several years to convince food manufacturers that they should replace BPA with a safer non-toxic alternative. However, grocery manufacturers and retailers have fought a vigorous battle to retain the chemical arguing that consumers are not adversely impacted by the small amounts of the chemical found in can linings. Two years ago the State of California took the first major regulatory step against BPA by listing it as a female reproductive toxicant under the state's Proposition 65 [see **OEHHA Finalizes Temporary Warning Regulations for BPA-Containing Cans and Bottles**²⁾, December 13, 2016].

The just-released CEH study reports on testing done on 250 canned foods purchased at four large supermarket chains: Kroger, Albertsons/Safeway, Dollar Tree, and 99 Cents Only. The stores are located in California, Idaho, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Rhode Island, and Virginia. CEH found that BPA was contained in about 40% of the cans tests. Even where BPA was not present, CEH found that some cans used BPA-substitutes that have not been shown to be safe; in particular PVC.

The CEH report, entitled **Kicking the Can**³⁾, does not list the number of cans tested in each state. As indicated above California listed BPA under Prop. 65 in 2015 and the requirement that manufacturers, retailers, or other responsible parties warn consumers of the presence of BPA became effective last year. Because of retailer concerns over the presence of pre-2015 inventory, the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) adopted regulations allowing retailers to place a warning at the check out counter without having to test and label each container. However, that regulation expires at the end of this year after which warnings will either have to be present on the can itself or on the shelf.

On June 30, CEH release **new test results**⁴⁾ that showed shoppers at certain ethnic groceries have a much higher risk of exposure to the toxic chemical Bisphenol A (BPA) than other shoppers. According to the results, 78 canned foods from grocery stores that market to the Asian Pacific

Islander communities in Los Angeles, San Diego, Sacramento and the Bay Area showed that more than 90% (71 of 78) of cans purchased from these groceries contain the dangerous chemical. Additionally, CEH found that just 3 of the 71 cans testing positive for BPA were listed in a state database that is intended to list canned foods that contain BPA. In addition, the CEH testing showed that many cans (19%) from these stores contained PVC (vinyl), a toxic substitute for BPA.

Some responsible parties may be able to avoid a warning if they can show that BPA meets a recently-established safe harbor (MADL) for BPA of 3 micrograms/day.

Resources for this article

1. released a report

<http://www.ceh.org/news-events/press-releases/content/nationwide-testing-shows-many-canned-foods-still-contain-chemical-linked-cancer-birth-defects/>

2. OEHHA Finalizes Temporary Warning Regulations for BPA-Containing Cans and Bottles

<https://prop65clearinghouse.com/articles/3198>

3. Kicking the Can

<https://prop65clearinghouse.com/documents/22282>

4. new test results

<http://www.ceh.org/news-events/press-releases/content/statewide-testing-finds-90-canned-foods-ethnic-groceries-contain-toxic-chemical-bpa/>