

What the Experts Are Saying About PBDEs

SENATE PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE & SAFETY

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Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry

(Agency of U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)

“Rats and mice that ate food with moderate amounts of PBDEs for a few days had effects on the thyroid gland. Those that ate smaller amounts for weeks or months had effects on the thyroid and the liver...Preliminary evidence suggests that high concentrations of PBDEs may cause neurobehavioral alterations and affect the immune system in animals.”



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

“Whether PBDEs pose a health risk to humans is a major area of current research.”



NewScientist magazine, January 15, 2005

Dust in American homes contains such high levels of flame retardants called PBDEs that young children could be ingesting up to 6,000 nanograms of these chemicals a day. “We cannot say what these levels will do,” says Heather Stapleton of the US National Institute of Standards and Technology in Maryland, whose team carried out the study. “But laboratory studies with rats and mice have shown that exposure to PBDEs can affect development.”



Linda Hoffman, Director, Washington State Department of Ecology,
Mary Selecky, Secretary, Washington State Department of Health

“Levels of PBDEs are increasing in the environment and in people. Although the levels currently found in humans do not pose an immediate health threat, increasing levels are expected to pose real health risks, particularly to our children... Tests on lab animals show that PBDEs can disrupt the neurological development of fetuses and infants. Although uncertainties exist regarding exposure pathways and the rate at which PBDEs break down, the potential costs of expected health risks are high.”



The Green Guide magazine, January-February 2005 issue

“The latest chemicals found to be approaching possibly unsafe levels in American women's breast milk, as well as umbilical-cord blood, are fire retardants known as polybrominated diphenyl ethers. or PBDEs.”



Kim Hooper, Hazardous Materials Laboratory and Thomas A. McDonald, Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, California EPA

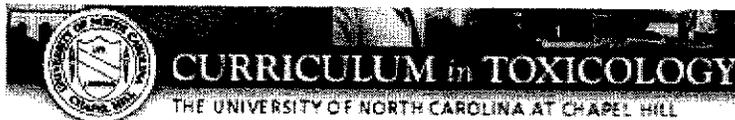
“A review of the use, occurrence, and toxicity of PBDEs indicates many parallels between some PBDEs, PCBs, and other polyhalogenated persistent organic pollutants, and suggests that the PBDEs may be a significant environmental challenge in the future.”



**THE UNIVERSITY of TEXAS
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH
AT HOUSTON**

**Arnold Schecter, University of Texas Health Sciences Center,
School of Public Health**

“The purpose of this study was to determine whether U.S. women have higher, equal, or lower milk PBDE levels than women in other countries. The answer is striking: the 47 individual U.S. women studied here had markedly higher levels in their breast milk compared to Europeans. This survey clearly indicates that high levels of PBDEs are found in U.S. women and can be transferred to the nursing infants.”



Linda S. Birnbaum, Environmental Protection Agency,

Daniele F. Staskal, University of North Carolina, Curriculum in Toxicology

“The BFRs [brominated flame retardants] represent major industrial chemicals whose use has increased dramatically over the past few decades. They are produced to prevent fires and thus can have a direct and obvious benefit. However, concerns are being raised because of their persistence, bioaccumulation, and potential for toxicity, both in animals and in humans.”

American Academy of Pediatrics

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American Academy of Pediatrics, Policy Statement: Breastfeeding and the Use of Human Milk, February 2005

“Although economic, cultural, and political pressures often confound decisions about infant feeding, the AAP firmly adheres to the position that breastfeeding ensures the best possible health as well as the best developmental and psychosocial outcomes for the infant. Enthusiastic support and involvement of pediatricians in the promotion and practice of breastfeeding is essential to the achievement of optimal infant and child health, growth, and development.”