

June 16th, 2021

COSMETICS ALLIANCE STATEMENT

Publication of Study Finding PFAS in Cosmetics

Background

There has been media coverage in both the U.S. and Canada regarding a recently published study finding various trace levels of PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) in some of the 231 cosmetic products tested – of which 17 were from Canada. The study was published in the *Journal of Environmental Science & Technology Letters* and is available [HERE](#).

PFAS comprise a class of more than 4,700 chemical compounds with differing chemistries that contain fluorine bonded to carbon, a bond which can make them difficult to break down and so persistent in the environment.

PFAS have been used in lubricants, stain repellents, waterproofing, non-stick coatings, and firefighting foams. They have also been found in consumer products including food packaging, carpeting and cosmetics.

Current Review Under Canada's Chemicals Management Plan (CMP)

Although few PFAS have been studied in detail, some of these have been linked to health effects including increased risk of cancers, reduced immune response and fertility, and altered metabolism and increased obesity. To date, three specific groups of PFAS (PFOS – perfluorooctane sulfonate, PFOA – perfluorooctanoic acid, and LC-PFCAs – long chain perfluorocarboxylic acids) are prohibited in Canada due to their risk to the environment.

As there is a concern that some of the replacement PFAS may also be associated with environmental and human health effects, the Government of Canada, through its world leading Chemicals Management Plan (CMP), is in the process of assessing these substances for their risk to human health and the environment. An update on this assessment process from Environment & Climate Change Canada was provided on April 24, 2021 and is available [HERE](#).

As part of this assessment process, Environment & Climate Change Canada was one of several funders of the recently published study to better understand the presence of PFAS in cosmetics. The CMP process, which is based upon the use of sound science and risk-assessment, includes the imposition of various risk management measures, if and as required, including restrictions and/or prohibitions. These are used to inform Health Canada's "Hotlist" of restricted and prohibited ingredients for cosmetics which is regularly updated.

Regulation of Cosmetics and Ingredients in Canada

Additionally, it should be noted that the Government of Canada regulates cosmetics both with respect to their ingredients (through the CMP), as well as finished products under the *Cosmetic Regulations* and the *Food and Drugs Act*. More specifically in Canada, all cosmetics products are required to be safe for human health when used as intended.

The *Cosmetic Regulations* also require that ingredients be listed on the product label using the International Nomenclature for Cosmetic Ingredients (INCI), and a failure to do so as set out in the regulations would be an offense.

Impurities that may be found in a product in trace amounts (i.e., parts per million/billion), whether they are naturally occurring or a by-product of the manufacturing process, are NOT ingredients. They may, however, be subject to limitations set out by Health Canada to ensure they do not present a risk to the health and safety of the consumer.

The study identified PFAS that were both ingredients and impurities.

Cosmetic Industry Commitment to CMP Review Process

Cosmetics Alliance Canada and our member companies have long supported Canada's Chemicals Management Plan and its science and risk assessment processes. The CMP has been an effective means of continually assessing the environmental and human health safety profiles of ingredients used in our products. We have and will continue to support the work of the CMP, the assessment of PFAS, as well any additional regulatory measures that are required as a result of this process.

We also welcome the contribution to the CMP process of researchers such as those who undertook this study as well as all environmental organizations dedicated to sound science and risk assessment in advancing the protection of our environmental and human health and safety.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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