

## Understanding the Risk Evaluation of HBCD

Ensuring the safety of chemicals is part of EPA's mission of protecting public health and the environment. Under the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) EPA reviews the potential risks of chemicals being used in the market.

This factsheet provides the public, businesses, and stakeholders with a clear picture of where EPA is in the risk evaluation process for HBCD, whether the Agency has found any unreasonable risks and what that means for chemical safety, and what EPA's next steps are.

### Chemical Description

- A flame retardant used primarily in construction materials, which may include structural insulated panels (SIPS).
- Use has declined dramatically over the past few years, primarily due to the use of replacement chemicals.
- Domestic U.S. manufacturers have indicated complete replacement of HBCD in their production lines.

### Conditions of Use Identified for Risk Evaluation

In the draft risk evaluation, EPA looked at eight conditions of use associated with the manufacturing (including import), processing, distribution, use, and disposal of HBCD, including the following:

- Importation for manufacturing
- Processing of flame retardants used in custom compounding of resin
- Processing of flame retardants used in plastics product manufacturing
- Recycling of foam and resin panels
- Distribution
- Building and construction materials
- Automobile replacement parts
- Recycled plastics
- Disposal of construction and demolition waste

### Draft Risk Evaluation

TSCA requires EPA to evaluate chemicals for unreasonable risks through a new risk evaluation process. In determining whether there is unreasonable risk, EPA weighs a variety of factors including, but not limited to, the effects of the chemical substance on health under the conditions of use (including cancer and non-cancer risks); the effects of the chemical substance on the environment under the conditions of use; the population exposed (including potentially exposed or susceptible populations); the severity of hazard; and the uncertainties.

In the June 2019 draft risk evaluation of HBCD, EPA made the following initial determinations on risk. These initial determinations may change as our assessment becomes more refined through the public and peer review process.

- **No unreasonable risks for the general population, including consumers and children.** HBCD is no longer domestically manufactured or imported in the U.S. and has been replaced by other chemicals. Calculated risk estimates are below levels of concern.

- **No unreasonable risks to workers or occupational non-users.** Again, HBCD is no longer domestically manufactured or imported in the U.S. and has been replaced by other chemicals. The use of HBCD does not present unreasonable risks to workers and applies to both those workers who come in direct contact with HBCD, as well as those who use the chemical but do not come in direct contact.
- **No unreasonable risk to the environment.** For all the conditions of use included in the draft risk evaluation, EPA found no unreasonable risks to the environment from HBCD.

## **Public Participation**

The draft risk evaluation will be available for public comment for 60 days in docket EPA-HQ-OPPT-2019-0237. This public comment period is an opportunity for you to submit any additional information to assist EPA in completing the final risk evaluation for HBCD. EPA will consider all comments submitted on the draft risk evaluation when developing a final risk evaluation.

## **Next Steps**

**This draft risk evaluation and the initial risk determinations are not a final action.** This draft represents the Agency's initial review of the scientific information on 1,4-dioxane and will be peer reviewed by independent scientific experts.

**EPA is committed to being open and transparent as the Agency follows the process required by the law** for evaluating potential risks from chemicals. EPA will continue to keep the public updated as the Agency moves through this process. Following the comprehensive risk evaluation process required by TSCA ensures that EPA has confidence in our final conclusions about whether a chemical poses any unreasonable risks, so the public can have confidence in the safety of chemicals on the market.

**The next step in the risk evaluation process is public participation.** EPA is asking the public and peer reviewers to provide input on the draft risk evaluations to ensure that the Agency is using the best available science.

**EPA's risk findings may change in response to comments** from scientific experts conducting a peer review and from the public on the draft risk evaluation. If EPA's final risk evaluation for HBCD finds unreasonable risks associated with this chemical under specific conditions of use, the Agency will propose actions to address those risks within the timeframe required by TSCA.