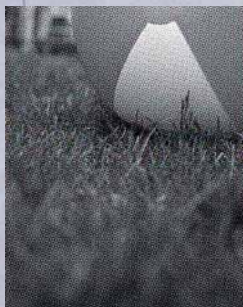


# PHTHALATE PLASTICISERS : COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

**FICTION**

All phthalates are already being banned



High phthalates – DINP, DIDP and DPHP – have been registered under the European regulation for chemical substances, REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals). EU risk assessments on DINP and DIDP have demonstrated their safe use in current applications. They are not classified for any

health or environmental effects. The only current exception is for toys and childcare articles that can be put in the mouth - where DINP and DIDP are restricted on the basis of the precautionary principle - and food contact packaging where some restrictions also apply.

As for low phthalates - DEHP, BBP, DBP and DIBP- they are not only on the REACH Candidate list but have also been listed on the Authorisation list. This means that from February 2015 onwards they will not be allowed in the EU unless authorisation has been granted for a specific use. In Europe, low phthalates have been banned in all toys and childcare articles as well as in cosmetics for many years.

**FACT**

Phthalates do not migrate or leach from PVC into our environment (air, water and soil)



Phthalates do not readily migrate and leach into the environment from flexible vinyl articles because they are physically bound within the PVC matrix. That is also the case in abraded particles that may be collected in the form of dust.

Phthalates can only be extracted by exposure to severe heat or using strong solvents. The minuscule amounts of phthalate plasticisers which can get into the environment are readily degradable and do not accumulate in the environment or in living organisms.

**FICTION**

The chemical industry is hiding data and using old scientific methods



The European regulation REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals) obliges chemical manufacturers and importers to provide a complete dossier to the European authorities in order to continue placing their substances on the market.

The Phthalate Industry supports research on the potential health and environmental effects of its products. Over the last 25 years, billions of Euros have been invested in the development of high phthalates which today represent almost 75 per cent of the European market for phthalates.

## 5 facts about Plasticisers & Phthalates

- ❑ Plasticisers are used to soften PVC and other polymers creating a whole new world of high performing applications.
- ❑ Phthalates are odourless and colourless substances.
- ❑ Phthalate plasticisers are among some of the most researched and tested chemical substances in the world.
- ❑ Phthalates are a large family of chemicals divided in two major groups: high and low molecular weight.
- ❑ High phthalates represent almost 75 per cent of the European market for phthalates.



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[www.plasticisers.org](http://www.plasticisers.org)

# PHTHALATE PLASTICISERS : COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

**FICTION**

## Phthalates are everywhere including in food and cosmetics

**Food:** The use of phthalates as food additives is not permitted. However, they are allowed in food contact applications, closely regulated by EU legislation which has established safe migration limits. Their use is very marginal and limited to applications such as flexible films and cling films for non-fatty food. Very low levels may be detected in some foods but they are well within safe limits.

**Plastic bottles:** Regarding the supposed presence of phthalates leaching out from water and soda bottles, the answer is very simple. They do not leach out of these bottles because these do not contain any phthalates. Plastic bottles are often made from a plastic called polyethylene terephthalate, also known as PET or polyester. Despite the similar name, PET and phthalates are very different.

**Cosmetics:** High phthalates are not used in cosmetics simply because they are not suitable for these applications. Regarding low phthalates, only DBP and DIBP were ever used in cosmetics but are no longer permitted in the EU because the European Cosmetics legislation prohibits the use of substances classified as carcinogenic, mutagenic and repro-toxic (CMR).



This may not be the case for products manufactured elsewhere. Today, only non-classified DMP and DEP phthalates can be used legally in cosmetics.

**FACT**

## Flexible PVC can be recycled

PVC has important qualities which meet key sustainability criteria. It is far less oil dependent than other major thermoplastics, it is highly durable and requires very little maintenance. It is also affordable and can be recycled many times without losing any of its original physical properties.

In Europe, thanks to the PVC voluntary initiative VinylPlus (previously known as Vinyl 2010) over a million tonnes of end-of-life vinyl products have been collected and recycled since the year 2000 (257,084 tonnes in 2011). About 45 per cent corresponds to flexible PVC collected from applications such as cables, flooring and coated fabrics.



**FICTION**

## All phthalates are carcinogenic and can cause adverse health effects such as obesity, asthma, infertility and allergies



To date, no reliable evidence has ever shown that high phthalates have caused harm to humans. High phthalates have been extensively studied and found to be safe for use in all current applications as documented in the European Union Risk Assessments.

Some low phthalates have been found to be reprotoxic in animal studies. They will have to go through the REACH authorisation process.

**FACT**

## High phthalates are not endocrine disruptors

Recent independent studies have shown no evidence of adverse effects mediated via an endocrine mode of action for high phthalates in animal studies and, equally, there is no evidence for such effects in humans. The results of this risk assessment have confirmed that they are not reproductive agents, are not classified for any health or environmental hazard, and can be safely used in all current applications.

Scientific evidence has led to classified low molecular weight phthalates (DEHP, DBP, BBP and DIBP) being stringently regulated via REACH. It is important to avoid making unjustified, undifferentiated and generic claims when referring to the effects of one single substance and not its entire family.

The general term "phthalates" is too often linked to "endocrine disruptors" in public and media debates. However, there is ample research published on phthalates which should not be ignored, whether the debate is scientific or political.