



Office of Environmental Health & Safety
333 S. Beaudry Avenue, 28th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90017
Phone: (213) 241-3199
Fax: (213) 241-6816



SAFETY ALERT

No. 14-03

Warning Labels for California Proposition 65

JANUARY 2014

In 1986, California voters approved an initiative to address their growing concerns about exposure to toxic chemicals. That initiative became the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, better known by its original name of Proposition 65. Proposition 65 requires the State to publish a [list of chemicals](#) known to cause cancer, birth defects or other reproductive harm. This list, which is updated at least once a year, has grown to include approximately 800 chemicals.

Proposition 65 warnings are commonly seen in restaurants, gas stations, grocery stores, hotels, schools, hospitals, and other public buildings in addition on a wide variety of consumer products. Increased compliance by manufacturers in providing warning labels has caused schools and offices to inquire about these labels and the law that requires their presence.

This Safety Alert is provided to make schools and offices aware of the Proposition 65 warning labels and highlight the District's commitment to communicating potential hazards.

What types of chemicals are on the Proposition 65 list?

The list contains a wide range of naturally occurring and synthetic chemicals that are known to cause cancer or birth defects or other reproductive harm. These chemicals include ingredients that used to be commonly found in construction materials such as asbestos, wood dust and quartz, as well as typical additives in gasoline such as toluene.

What is required of companies doing business in California?

Proposition 65 requires businesses to notify consumers about significant amounts of chemicals in the products they purchase, in their homes or workplaces, or that are released into the environment. If a warning is placed on a product label or posted or distributed at the workplace, the business issuing the warning is aware or believes that one or more listed chemicals is present. By law, a warning must be given for listed chemicals unless exposure is low enough to pose no significant risk of cancer or is significantly below levels observed to cause birth defects or other reproductive harm. It is important to remember that the warning labels are not there to scare consumers but to provide basic awareness.

Does the District allow the use of products with Proposition 65 chemicals?

The Office of Environmental Health and Safety (OEHS) evaluates and approves all chemical products prior to purchase or use at District sites. Whenever possible, the District will choose products that are the safest to use. In general, products that contain chemicals listed in Proposition 65 will be disapproved unless there are no other substitutes available (such as gasoline) or when use of the product will not pose a significant hazard.

What District offices are involved with the evaluation and procurement of products that may be subject to Proposition 65?

The Materiel Management Branch (MMB) successfully ensures schools and offices have access to the multitude of products needed for the everyday operation of schools and offices. Part of this endeavor involves the safety evaluation process. OEHS works with the MMB to ensure items available in the District's warehousing system are reviewed for safety prior to procurement. Working together, OEHS and MMB provides these services in support of a safe learning and working environment.

If you have questions regarding Proposition 65 labels, like the one below, please contact OEHS at (213) 241-3199. Similarly, should you have questions about whether a specific chemical product has been evaluated; you may also view a list of approved products at:

<http://lausd-oehs.org/productreview.asp>.

