

IKEAs approach to chemical management – a brief introduction

Abstract

The IKEA vision is to create a better everyday life for the many people and the long term IKEA direction states that IKEA business shall have an overall positive impact on people and the environment. Consequently, IKEA wants to minimize or totally refrain from the use of chemicals and substances that can be harmful to people and the environment, by choosing better alternatives wherever possible. The principle is to apply the strictest health, safety and environmental requirements on any of the sales markets to all markets, whenever applicable.

IKEA is continually working with chemicals and is trying to phase-out the use of questionable substances. Some examples: IKEA has set an early voluntary ban on PVC (decided 1991) besides in cables, an early ban of all brominated organic flame retardants in furniture (effective from 2000) and a ban on formaldehyde emitting paints and lacquers on all products (effective from 1993).

Our long term vision for wood based products is that the emission levels of formaldehyde shall be on the same levels as natural wood. The vision will be implemented step by step.

These are just some examples of what IKEA is doing today. The future is however holding many new challenges and most things still remains to be done.