

Product Standards

EPA Pesticides and CPSC Consumer Products

I. Overview

The federal government is primarily responsible for setting standards for products in commerce that may impact health and safety. These standards reduce the dangers posed by these products by banning their use in housing, requiring safer designs, or specifying label requirements.

EPA regulates pesticides and does not allow them to be sold or used with prior approval. The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) regulates most other consumer products related to housing but requires only compliance with general requirements. In response to specific problems, CPSC adopts specific standards to address the problem such as banning lead containing paint. HUD sets standards for formaldehyde in wood in manufactured housing. The HUD label has been widely used as a voluntary standard beyond manufactured housing.

II. EPA Pesticide Registration

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency sets [product standards for pesticides](#). A pesticide is broadly defined as any substance or mixture of substances intended for preventing, destroying, repelling, or mitigating any pest. Pests are living organisms that occur where they are not wanted or that cause damage to crops or humans or other animals. Therefore, a pesticide includes herbicides, insecticides, and fungicides. Products which contain certain low-risk ingredients, such as garlic and mint oil, have been exempted from Federal registration requirements, although State regulatory requirements may still apply.

No pesticide can be sold without first being registered by EPA pursuant to the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA). For a pesticide to be registered, EPA must affirmatively determine that the product does not pose an unreasonable risk to human health and the environment when used consistent with the label. The label becomes the law that must be followed when used the pesticide. Anyone, even a consumer, who does not follow the product label are violating the law.

Through the registration process, EPA can restrict the sale or use of a pesticide including its use in housing. It can require that only licensed pest control operators use the pesticides by classifying it as a "restricted use" pesticide. During the past few years, EPA has removed once common pesticides such as [chlorpyrifos](#) and [diazinon](#) from consumer use and restricted access to the products.

[In May 2008, EPA took the unusual step of limiting the use and sale of rodenticides because of pervasive misuse.](#) More than 3000 children required treatment for accidental exposure to a type of rodenticide that acts as an anticoagulant in mammals. These second generation anticoagulants kill rodents with just one feeding and persist in body tissues. EPA required that all rodenticide bait products be sold to consumers only in tamper resistant bait stations. Loose bait such as pellets would be prohibited.

See www.epa.gov/pesticides for more information.

III. CPSC Hazardous Substances Laws

The [Consumer Product Safety Commission sets product standards pursuant to the Consumer Product Safety Act and the Federal Hazardous Substance Act](#). The CPSC has adopted mandatory products standards for the following items related to housing, furniture, and appliances:

- [Safety standard for walk-behind power lawn mowers](#): 16 CFR Part 1205
- [Safety standard for swimming pool slides](#): 16 CFR Part 1207
- [Safety standard for automatic residential garage door operators](#): 16 CFR Part 1211
- [Safety standard for entrapment hazards in bunk beds](#): 16 CFR Part 1213
- [Ban of unstable refuse bins](#): 16 CFR Part 1301
- [Ban of extremely flammable contact adhesives](#): 16 CFR Part 1302

- [Ban of lead-containing paint and certain consumer products bearing lead-containing paint](#): 16 CFR Part 1303
- [Ban of consumer patching compounds containing respirable free-form asbestos](#): 16 CFR Part 1304
- [Ban of artificial emberizing materials \(ash and embers\) containing respirable free-form asbestos](#): 16 CFR Part 1305
- [Self pressurized consumer products containing chlorofluorocarbons](#): 16 CFR Part 1401
- [CB base station antennas, TV antennas, and supporting structures](#): 16 CFR Part 1402
- [Cellulose insulation](#): 16 CFR Part 1404
- [Coal and wood burning appliances--notification of performance and technical data](#): 16 CFR Part 1406
- [Requirements for full-size baby cribs](#): 16 CFR Part 1508
- [Requirements for non-full-size baby cribs](#): 16 CFR Part 1509
- [Requirements for bunk beds](#): 16 CFR Part 1513
- [Standard for the flammability of vinyl plastic film](#) 16 CFR Part 1611
- [Standard for the surface flammability of carpets and rugs \(FF 1-70\)](#) 16 CFR Part 1631
- [Standard for the surface flammability of small carpets and rugs \(FF 2-70\)](#) 16 CFR Part 1631
- [Standard for the flammability of mattresses and mattress pads \(FF 4-72, amended\)](#) 16 CFR Part 1632
- [Standard for the flammability \(open flame\) of mattress sets \(Eff. 7-1-07\)](#) 16 CFR Part 1633
- [Standard for devices to permit the opening of household refrigerator doors from the inside](#) 16 CFR Part 1750

For a complete list sorted by product, go to www.cpsc.gov/businfo/reg1.html.

It also requires labeling of products and bans products containing hazardous substances if they could injure a child.

See www.cpsc.gov for more information