

PFAS Ban In Cosmetics Is Precedent Setting Step In CA

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[We previously reported](#) on the [Toxic Free Cosmetics Act](#) (Assembly Bill 2762) out of California, which was passed by the California legislature and sent to the Governor for signature or veto on August 30, 2020. Today, Governor Gavin Newsom signed the bill into law, making California the first state in the nation to ban certain chemicals from cosmetics and personal care products. Most notably, the bill bans 13 different kinds of PFAS from use in cosmetics and personal care products manufactured or sold in California. The PFAS ban in cosmetics is an unprecedented step in the United States. The ban on the chemicals in these products takes effect January 1, 2025. The bill does permit for “unavoidable trace amounts” of the various banned chemicals, recognizing that the end products may inevitably and inadvertently be contaminated with chemicals after the manufacturing process – for example, from leaching from product packaging.

The bill is a landmark bill for several reasons, first and foremost because it is the first of its kind in California and the United States in banning such a broad array of chemicals from personal care products. Previous state-level legislation related to chemicals in personal care products have focused primarily on one or two chemicals per bill. The bill is also unique in that it received bipartisan support from legislators and resounding support from the Personal Care Products Council. On the surface, the support of this organization surprised many; however, the Personal Care Products Council issued a statement in which they indicated that they view their support for the bill as a way of bringing harmony to regulations that already exist. The European Union has for many years aggressively studied and regulated many of the chemicals subject to the California bill, and has already banned them in many products, including cosmetics and personal care products. The Council therefore saw supporting the California bill as a way to unify the regulations that exist, rather than attempting to come into compliance with a multitude of varying regulations.

The impact of the California regulations will also have national and global ripple effects. In the United States, California is often at the forefront of products and chemical regulation initiatives. States often model their own regulations off of California regulations. In addition, California is the fifth largest economy in the world. Cosmetics and personal care products’ manufacturers can now adjust product design, manufacturing, and distribution in a much more globally uniform manner, which will result in cost savings to manufacturers.

Companies involved in the stream of commerce for cosmetics and personal care products should remain informed regarding California’s sweeping regulations so they do not get caught off guard. While there is ample time to adjust R&D, manufacturing, and distribution practices since the effective

date is not until 2025, it will be important for companies to not fall victim to believing that the Toxic-Free Cosmetics Act will be the final say in regulating the cosmetics and personal care products industries. More regulations are likely in the future, and staying informed and ensuring that strong compliance programs are in place are essential to businesses not being caught off guard in the future.

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