

Chat from EPA Listening Session Expansion of Safer Choice and Design for the Environment

August 29, 2023
2:00 pm – 3:00 pm ET

Comment to all panelists: 2:06 PM

Hi! Will this presentation be shared by email?

Comment to all panelists: 2:11 PM

Could you please update the audience on the status of EPA's work to support the transition to PFAS-free fire fighting foams?

Comment to all panelists: 2:15 PM

My daughters told me that they would like me to ask EPA if cosmetic products could be added to Safer Choice certifications. They are looking for a credible way to choose safer cosmetic products.

Comment to all panelists: 2:18 PM

Will a recording of this webinar and/or the training slides be made available to attendees?

Comment to all panelists: 2:19 PM

Can DfE certification for an antimicrobial product be submitted concurrently in the same PRIA submission of the said formula's initial registration with EPA, i.e. concurrently rather than in separate submissions?

Comment to all panelists: 2:26 PM

Is EPA considering adding sectors impacted by First 10 TSCA chemicals (metal finishing, auto....)

Comment to all panelists: 2:27 PM

Is the main difference between safer choice and DFE the fact that Dfe only focuses on disinfectants?

Comment to all panelists: 2:27 PM

Has EPA preliminarily identified any product categories to expand the Safer Choice and DfE programs into?

Comment to all panelists: 2:27 PM

The Navy uses a lot of adhesives, glues, and sealants.

Comment to all panelists: 2:27 PM

What are some of the barriers to expansion, growth, and scale?

Comment to all panelists: 2:27 PM

Is the EPA using the National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act of 1995 and OMB Circular A-119 directive for agencies to use voluntary consensus standards created by the private sector as an alternative to agency-developed standards when possible as part of their review for expansion? For example, if the EPA is considering personal care, are they considering that several other robust, voluntary consensus standards, which already address PFAS as a chemical class, such as Cradle to Cradle and Green Seal already exist?

Comment to all panelists: 2:27 PM

Will Furniture also be considered as a candidate for the program too? Maybe in the future?

Comment to all panelists: 2:28 PM

Can is share some feedback orally?

Comment to all panelists: 2:28 PM

1) Will these slides be made available?

Comment to all panelists: 2:28 PM

One of the slides mentioned mandatory ingredient disclosure for Safer Choice/DfE; does that imply confidential business information comments cannot be used these programs?

Comment to all panelists: 2:28 PM

What is Safer Choice's definition of PFAS? This definition is imperative for understanding if any expansion of Safer Choice into other categories would provide the same level of protection that other ecolabels which address PFAS as a chemical class already provide in these categories.

Comment to all panelists: 2:28 PM

Will we see comments submitted via chat from all participants?

Comment to all panelists: 2:28 PM

Are the Safer Choice and DfE certifications only intended to be consumer-facing? Would you consider certifying inputs such as stain- or water-resistant additives that are included in the manufacturing of textile products, including clothing, footwear or furniture?

Comment to all panelists: 2:28 PM

How does the no de minimis rule impact addition of chemicals to the SCIL list?

Comment to all panelists: 2:28 PM

We encourage you to consider anti-microbial packaging for these programs. OR, if registered under FIFRA, are they already eligible? thank you

Comment to all panelists: 2:28 PM

can you provide some insight into what the process looks like related to

Comment to all panelists: 2:28 PM

Is EPA looking for comments on the standard as well as adding categories

Comment to all panelists: 2:28 PM

Paints and Coatings (including paints, primers, sealants, waterproofing chemicals, etc.) would be a great category to consider because many of these products contain PFAS and most of the other certified products are only single attribute (low emissions).

Comment to all panelists: 2:29 PM

Thank you for the informative presentation. Is the program intended for end users or are you planning to add industrial/commercial/janitorial uses.

Comment to all panelists: 2:29 PM

Safer Choice for Molded Fiber products (Plates, Bowls, Clamshells) - PFAS

Comment to all panelists: 2:29 PM

Are there product categories for medical-level cleaners? Like for use in hospitals and those settings?

Comment to all panelists: 2:29 PM

expanding into other categories, including timelines, approval levels, etc?

Comment to all panelists: 2:29 PM

What is the timeframe for evaluating the written comments and what is the timeframe for adding new categories?

Comment to all panelists: 2:29 PM

2) Does your process include actual analytical testing results submitted by applicants? If they don't have analytical data, do you require them to do analytical testing? What kind of PFAS testing do you require?

Comment to all panelists: 2:29 PM

I just wanted to request the slides via email as I was 5 minutes late.

Comment to all panelists: 2:29 PM

Nice presentation. Will you please be providing the participants the PowerPoint/PDF slides? While providing the safer choice assessment and certifications, do you report certainty/uncertainty of the risks (as new information/monitoring data are reported)?

Comment to all panelists: 2:29 PM

Thank you for all your hard work at Safer Choice and DfE! Do you consider the product packaging in your evaluation of safer products? I'm concerned about plasticizers or other harmful ingredients leaching from the packaging into the product. These ingredients would not be intentionally added to the product formulation.

Comment to all panelists: 2:30 PM

Is FDA planning to create a positive list of chemicals (like a SCIL) for personal care products?
Doesn't FDA currently defer to EPA with regards to the toxicity of and tolerances for pesticides?

Comment to all panelists: 2:30 PM

Do products that are certified Safer Choice need to be consumer products, or can they be products that are not typically used for the general public (or on typical store shelves)? For example, we would like to help hair and nail salon owners find safer disinfectants to clean their tools. Home consumers don't typically buy this type of disinfectant, but small business owners (salon owners) do. Could Safer Choice certify products that are not commonly used in the home by consumer, but by professional in certain sectors?

Comment to all panelists: 2:30 PM

The BioBased certification lists agricultural adjuvants. Could a product that has been accepted for this list also be qualified as a Safer choice-if there were an agricultural products Safer Choice category?

Comment to all panelists: 2:30 PM

would cosmetic ingredients (such as preservatives or chelating agents) be consider as a product category ?

Comment to all panelists: 2:30 PM

We're proud to have multiple CleanGredients-certified products through the Safer Choice program. However, the costs are significant. As the program expands, this could affect many companies. Are there requirements for Third Party Reviewers to ensure fair pricing? Thank you!

Comment to all panelists: 2:30 PM

The Navy also uses a lot of paint. I saw that there are already two independent ecolabels and one corporate ecolabel for low VOC Paint. Are there plans for the government to develop their own Paint ecolabel?

Comment to all panelists: 2:30 PM

Can you speak to Safer Choice bandwidth and capacity for expansion as well as the potential for Congressional authorization for the program so that it isn't targeted in the future by less supportive administrations?

Comment to all panelists: 2:30 PM

Hello, In regards to Aerosol and BOV packaged products, can SC re-evaluate the restrictive particle size requirement. Expecially when using SC approved ingred.

Comment to all panelists: 2:30 PM

Have you considered paint and paint strippers? PFAS has been found in paint and there's potential for significant down the drain disposal. Paint strippers often contain very harmful chemicals and it would be helpful to have a safer label.

Comment to all panelists: 2:30 PM

Would the EPA consider expansion of this program to minimum risk pesticides?

Comment to all panelists: 2:30 PM

Would you consider adding waste reduction of the packaging as a requirement to be certified or a higher level of certification as a Safer Choice product? For example now the laundry detergent is coming in sheets, , no plastic to take care of.

Comment to all panelists: 2:31 PM

One important category that EPA should strongly consider is beauty and personal care products. These products often have chemicals of high concern including not only PFAS but others such as phthalates and formaldehyde releasers. There is certainly overlap in terms of functional uses between beauty and personal care products and other formulated products EPA has reviewed. And there's growing consumer and retail demand for beauty and personal care products that are safer for people and the environment. Will EPA consider expanding the program to beauty and personal care products?

Comment to all panelists: 2:31 PM

OLEM, OW, and other offices' lists of PFAS are changing. When you specify PFAS (as example), it is assumed that you are not considering the universe of PFAS - right?

Comment to all panelists: 2:31 PM

please expand to personal care products and cosmetics & laundry detergent sheets: EVERYONE and every household uses them

Comment to all panelists: 2:31 PM

When you say PFAS-free, do you define it as No intentionally-added PFAS with some kind of numeric threshold? Or do you mean no impurities either, and all results must be Non-detect?

Comment to all panelists: 2:31 PM

Pet care is a very large and rapidly growing area (particularly post covid) and we would be keenly interested in working with the Safer Choice Team to work through the details and see it come to fruition in the near term

Comment to all panelists: 2:32 PM

- would that be a new application field for EPA?

Comment to all panelists: 2:32 PM

Would like to see expansion of EPA Safer Choice into chemically intensive school supplies like markers, correction fluids, glues, school art supplies. I'm not sure ACMI AP nontoxic is really comprehensive enough to cover these items.

Comment to all panelists: 2:32 PM

Can you explain how new product category criteria would be created? Specifically, would this work be outsourced to standards development organizations or would this criteria be created internally? Would there be an opportunity for manufacturers to participate in the criteria development process as new categories are added?

Comment to all panelists: 2:32 PM

also, laundry detergent sheet will reduce plastic as well

Comment to all panelists: 2:32 PM

We understand that EPA has referenced potentially expanding Safer Choice to include personal care products. Is EPA proposing to expand the existing standard §4.5 (products designed for prolonged dermal contact) to include "rinse off" personal care products? Or does EPA's proposed expansion simply mean EPA will encourage personal care companies to participate in the voluntary program under existing §4.5?

Comment to all panelists: 2:32 PM

Any update on fragrance criteria?

Comment to all panelists: 2:32 PM

In terms of what factors EPA should consider, another key question EPA should be thinking about is whether or not the product category has environmental justice implications, for example products that are more frequently used by communities of color and low income communities. For example, peer reviewed studies have found that women of color can be disproportionately exposed to chemicals of concern in beauty and personal care products such as in hair straighteners and relaxers and skin lightening cream.

Comment to all panelists: 2:32 PM

Or considering the manufacturer or seller taking back the plastic containers of products

Comment to all panelists: 2:33 PM

how will this expansion of DFE program impact cleaningredients listing?

Comment to all panelists: 2:33 PM

Fuels and energy sources are the number one agents that impact both human health and the environment. Would the field of fuels and chemical energy sources be too far fetch fto be added to this program?

Comment to all panelists: 2:33 PM

Has EPA considered including microbial cleaners in the program, sometimes also known as "probiotic cleaners"?

Comment to all panelists: 2:33 PM

Is there any plan to look at EPA's minimum risk approved ingredients (25b) to determine if they meet Safer Choice criteria/approval?

Comment to all panelists: 2:33 PM

Air fresheners

Comment to all panelists: 2:34 PM

Ditto on personal care and cosmetics, etc.

Comment to all panelists: 2:34 PM

Is there any coordination on this expansion with the European Commission. For example, I'm familiar with USDA Organic having reciprocity with EU Organic. This type of harmonization is helpful from a global commerce perspective.

Comment to all panelists: 2:34 PM

When was the last time that Safer Choice and DfE were expanded?

Comment to all panelists: 2:34 PM

Expand automotive cleaners to waxes, window cleaners, engine cleaners, tire cleaners, etc

Comment to all panelists: 2:34 PM

Hello Safer Choice team! Will you be expanding or tightening recertification or requirements? for example (and to put in context), with the packaging requirements there could be a requirement every year to increase % of recycled content in the products, etc.

Comment to all panelists: 2:34 PM

What is the status of EPA's evaluation of expanding the Microbial Cleaners category for Safer Choice to include indoor use? EPA's supplemental considerations document for Microbial Cleaners from 2013 suggests that potential respiratory issues caused by use of such products indoors are a concern (e.g., HP). Thank you.

Comment to all panelists: 2:34 PM

What is EPA doing to optimize outreach and understanding about these product labels by the general public?

Comment to all panelists: 2:34 PM

Do you look at the impact of packaging materials?

Comment to all panelists: 2:35 PM

Expand to house paints

Comment to all panelists: 2:35 PM

Is there a complied list of the most popular 20 or so Safer Choice products at the consumer level?
Or a ranking of the most popular within individual category? Say laundry, surface cleaner, etc.

Comment to all panelists: 2:35 PM

Kids products, cosmetics, pedicure and manicure, salon products or general female products
would benefit from the safer choice logo

Comment to all panelists: 2:35 PM

Expand to personal care - products that clean the human body

Comment to all panelists: 2:35 PM

Can you please clarify the product-level requirements related to packaging?

Comment to all panelists: 2:35 PM

Can hygiene products be added to the list of product categories? Has EPA given thought to
that?

Comment to all panelists: 2:36 PM

Will EAL (environmentally acceptable lubricants) be included/integrated in safer choice? EAL list
hasn't been updated since 2013.

Comment to all panelists: 2:36 PM

is EPA open to reviewing and including certain insecticide products? Both EPA registered
products and 25b minimum risk products that aren't otherwise reviewed by the Agency (similar
to an OMRI review)?

Comment to all panelists: 2:36 PM

or for DfE

Comment to all panelists: 2:36 PM

Do consumer electronics count as a separate sector under the Safer Choice or DfE program?

Comment to all panelists: 2:36 PM

You said there is a floor finishing product that is PFAS free, could that category be expanded to
spray -on water/stain resistant products

Comment to all panelists: 2:37 PM

Has EPA identified the criteria it will be using to prioritize product categories for the certification
under the Safer Choice program (e.g., health and safety benefits, climate benefits, lack of other
certifications for the category, etc.)

Comment to all panelists: 2:37 PM

Would also suggest construction materials

Comment to all panelists: 2:37 PM

would anything prevent you from looking at fertilizers, or pesticides?

Comment to all panelists: 2:37 PM

What alignment does this program have with the USDA BioPreferred Program in certifying biobased chemical ingredients?

Comment to all panelists: 2:38 PM

Has EPA consulted with FDA with regard to the expansion of the Safer Choice Program to include personal care products, particularly as FDA is actively working to implement recently enacted comprehensive federal cosmetic legislation (i.e., MoCRA)? It seems like it could cause consumer confusion about the safety of such products.

Comment to all panelists: 2:38 PM

EPA Safer Choice could also be used for paints, stains, and other chemically intensive home improvement products.

Comment to all panelists: 2:39 PM

I should add, this is of particular importance to UVCB chemicals. Sorry for the miss.

Comment to all panelists: 2:39 PM

DfE could be expanded to other insecticides, pesticides, herbicides commonly used by consumers and businesses.

Comment to all panelists: 2:40 PM

How do Safer Choice and DfE intersect with GSA purchasing programs (GSA Advantage and BioPreferred etc) and will new product categories be ones that GSA will eventually incorporate into their programs?

Comment to all panelists: 2:40 PM

do you have a alternative rating for cosmetics that are solely plant based

Comment to all panelists: 2:40 PM

Is there a way to utilize products that require warning words on labels by CPSC regulations to inform Safer Choice target categories? The warning words are the historical way that consumers are alerted to hazards in a product. CPSC also receives reports of consumer injury from products.

Comment to all panelists: 2:41 PM

Has EPA had any engagement with FDA on the Safer Choice Program regarding FDA-regulated products? Has there been any thought about how that arrangement might work in practice?

Comment to all panelists: 2:42 PM

This would "Greatly Open" new products as "aerosol"

Comment to all panelists: 2:42 PM

If cosmetics were added would it require a separate certification standard?

Comment to all panelists: 2:43 PM

PFAS are widely used and found in paper&card based food packaging, is that a field where Safer Choice could be used?

Comment to all panelists: 2:45 PM

To clarify, does Safer Choice require that all of a product's ingredients be listed on the SCIL?

Comment to all panelists: 2:45 PM

How do you make sure that a product reassessment occurs each time there is reformulation, to ensure that the Safer Choice label is still warranted?

Comment to all panelists: 2:46 PM

What is EPA's timeframe for assessing comments and adding new product categories?

Comment to all panelists: 2:46 PM

Will the slides you presented be made available?

Comment to all panelists: 2:47 PM

what has been the growth rate for Safer Choice certified products year over year? do you have a growth goal on mind for this year, and if you were to expand to other product categories how that will impact your current growth plans?

Comment to all panelists: 2:47 PM

I've seen a couple versions of the Safer Choice logo, one with a little blue house and another with that being replaced by a circle behind the people silhouettes. Is one, the house version, just noting more consumer-oriented products, and the circle more for business/commercial/industrial-level products?

Comment to all panelists: 2:48 PM

Has DfE looked at safer food-contact surface sanitizers? There seem to be very few safer products identified that could replace chlorine bleach and quats.

Comment to all panelists: 2:48 PM

Are there any concerns that the program could confuse consumers of cosmetics given the current implementation of MoCRA and its requirements?

Comment to all panelists: 2:50 PM

FDA and EPA have a long history of collaborating on toxic chemicals in consumer products, including efforts to set and enforce pesticide tolerances. Given FDA's new responsibilities and limited resources, it's very important that the EPA develop a SCIL for personal care product manufacturers.

Comment to all panelists: 2:51 PM

Since sunscreen is something that goes directly into lakes and oceans (as well as down drains) is there any federal plan to implement oxybenzone and octinoxate free products ?

Comment to all panelists: 2:53 PM

As EPA thinks about other categories re: PFAS, a key challenge is avoiding PFAS as a contaminant in various product sectors. EPA should think about how Safer Choice can help ensure PFAS is not present as a contaminant in Safer Choice certified products.

Comment to all panelists: 2:53 PM

Is EPA planning to revise the Safer Choice Program standards?

Comment to all panelists: 2:57 PM

It would be helpful for Safer Choice to make sure the package the cleaner (or other product is in) has not been fluorinated.

Comment to all panelists: 2:57 PM

I don't have a question at this point but wanted to thank you for this opportunity to send written comments on the expansion. Thank you for supporting and growing this excellent program that helps to advance safer chemistry and products.

Comment to all panelists: 2:57 PM

Safer Choice can improve state/local government efforts in conducting pollution prevention/toxic reductions activities. The more certified products relevant to businesses that are available improves our capacity to identify recommend products, both reducing generation of hazardous waste and reducing worker exposures. There is a significant environmental justice consideration, as evidence suggests that marginalized populations (racial/ethnic minorities, low income, etc.) are overrepresented in high hazard industries and experience higher levels of occupational exposures and illness. Many products used in industries with both vulnerable workers and chemical exposures may be amenable to Safer Choice and DfE programs, e.g., beauty products, paints/sealants, professional laundry chemicals, industrial degreasers.

Comment to all panelists: 3:00 PM

Thank you.