

Guiding Principles for Chemicals Policy

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Businesses

Construction Specialties, Inc.
Corporate Express, a Staples Company
Green Harvest Technologies
Hospira
HP
IHS
Method
Pure Strategies
Q Collection
Seventh Generation
Sustainable Research Group
True Textiles, Inc.
Whole Foods

Health Care Organizations

Catholic Healthcare West
Consorta
Health Care Without Harm
Kaiser Permanente
Practice Greenhealth
Premier

Investors

As You Sow
Boston Common Asset
Management, LLC
Dominican Sisters of Hope
General Council, Adrian Dominican
Sisters
Inhance Investment Management Inc.
Mercy Investment Program
Northwest Coalition for Responsible
Investment
Rose Foundation for Communities
and the Environment
Sisters of Mercy, Regional Community
of Detroit Charitable Trust
Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia
Ursuline Sisters of Tildonk–U.S. Province

NGOs

Breast Cancer Fund
Center for Environmental Health
ChemSec
Clean New York
Clean Production Action
Clean Water Action
Commonweal
Ecology Center
Electronic Take Back Coalition
Environmental Health Fund
Environmental Health Strategy Center
Healthy Building Network
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
Natural Resources Defense Council
Washington Toxics Coalition
Women's Voices for the Earth

Demand for products made from greener chemicals is growing rapidly. Consumers, investors and governments want chemicals that have low to no toxicity and degrade into innocuous substances in the environment.¹ Leading businesses are seeking to capture these emerging market opportunities by redesigning their products and catalyzing change in their supply chains.

To advance an economy where the production and use of chemicals are healthy for humans, as well as for our global environment and its non-human inhabitants, responsible companies and their supply chains should adopt and implement the following four guiding principles for chemicals policy:

- 1. Know and disclose product chemistry.** Manufacturers will identify the substances associated with and used in a product across its lifecycle and will increase as appropriate the transparency of the chemical constituents in their products, including the public disclosure of chemicals of high concern.² Buyers will request product chemistry data from their suppliers.
- 2. Assess and avoid hazards.** Manufacturers will determine the hazard characteristics of chemical constituents and formulations in their products, use chemicals with inherently low hazard potential, prioritize chemicals of high concern for elimination, minimize exposure when hazards cannot be prevented, and redesign products and processes to avoid the use and/or generation of hazardous chemicals. Buyers will work with their suppliers to achieve this principle.
- 3. Commit to continuous improvement.** Establish corporate governance structures, policies and practices that create a framework for the regular review of product and process chemistry, and that promote the use of chemicals, processes, and products with inherently lower hazard potential.
- 4. Support public policies and industry standards** that: advance the implementation of the above three principles, ensure that comprehensive hazard data are available for chemicals on the market, take action to eliminate or reduce known hazards and promote a greener economy, including support for green chemistry research and education.

These principles are key features of an effective strategy for promoting, developing and using chemicals that are environmentally preferable across their entire lifecycle.

¹ These are two of the 12 Principles of Green Chemistry defined by Paul Anastas and John Warner in: Green Chemistry: Theory and Practice, 1999 (Oxford University Press: New York).

² "Chemicals of high concern" include substances that have the following properties: 1) persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic (PBT); 2) very persistent and very bioaccumulative (vPvB); 3) very persistent and toxic (vPT); 4) very bioaccumulative and toxic (vBT); 5) carcinogenic; 6) mutagenic; 7) reproductive or developmental toxicant; 8) endocrine disruptor; or 9) neurotoxicant. "Toxic" (T) includes both human toxicity and ecotoxicity.