

Corporate Leadership for PVC-Free Products

In the past year, many building material companies joined the ranks of industry leaders, such as **Nike**, **Mattel**, **Shaw**, and **Carnegie Fabrics**, by introducing new PVC-free product lines, including:

Collins & Aikman

Construction Specialties

Draper

Firestone

Herman Miller

Hunter Douglas

InPro

Lutron

Mecho

Nysan



Find out more about PVC-free solutions from
HBN's Alternative Database
(<http://www.healthybuilding.net/pvc/alternatives.html>)

For additional information contact:

hbn
HEALTHY BUILDING NETWORK
www.healthybuilding.net



VINYL
IT DOESN'T PASS
THE SMELL TEST



hbn

HEALTHY BUILDING NETWORK

Achieving Environmental Health and
Justice Where We Work, Live and Play



Just follow your nose.

Your first sniff of PVC's signature smell was likely to have been when you opened a new PVC shower curtain or got into a new car. That chemical odor is your first clue that using PVC comes at a price to your air quality.

Emerging science from the last decade supports what your nose knew instinctively; PVC is a material that is hazardous for your health and the health of the environment.

PVC's signature smell comes from a toxic brew of nasty chemical additives needed to make this brittle, short-lived plastic into something flexible or durable. In the process, vinyl chloride - a *known human carcinogen* - is combined with toxic chemicals ranging from asthmagenic and endocrine-disrupting phthalates, like DEHP, to nervous system damaging metals, like lead and cadmium.

In air emissions tests of PVC shower curtains conducted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) four air toxics were detected: toluene, methyl isobutyl ketone, ethylbenzene, and phenol¹. The EPA found damaging information about the negative impact a PVC shower curtain has on indoor air quality:

- Concentrations for toluene exceeded exposure limits set by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration,
- Shower curtains can cause elevated indoor air toxics concentrations, which can persist for more than a month.

The EPA concluded its study with a warning: **"Caution should be exercised when opening the bag of a newly bought shower curtain to minimize the exposure risk."**

Some PVC products, like pipes, siding, and window blinds, don't release PVC's signature smell. But that doesn't make them safe or healthy for you and your family.

¹ Chang, JCS, Fortmann, R, and Roache, N, "Air Toxics Emissions from a Vinyl Shower Curtain," Proceedings: Indoor Air 2002.

Avoiding PVC is a mainstream green building value. Why use a toxic material when there are many safer, healthier, and more economical alternatives readily available on the market? That thinking has led an increasing number of corporations and municipalities to decide to avoid PVC in favor of alternative materials.

PVC products used in buildings: blinds, siding, pipes, floors, carpet-backing, wall-covering, shower curtains, mattresses, toys, adhesive tapes, tablecloths, roofing membranes, gutters, cables, fencing/decking/railing

PVC-free is the wave of the future.

Avoid PVC materials to create healthier places where people work, live, and play.