

US Center for Environmental Health Found High Levels of Lead in PVC Bibs

In May 2007, an article revealed that the legal action brought by the Center of Environmental Health (CEH) resulted a major US retailer to withdraw a significant number of bibs made of polyvinyl chloride (PVC) or 'vinyl' as a result of excessive levels of lead.

In recent years, there have been a number of legal settlements in the US due to excessive levels of lead in a range of consumer products, in particular products designed or marketed for children such as baby powders, medicines, candies, jewelry and vinyl lunchboxes. The legal action brought by the CEH has resulted the retailer stopping the sale of the PVC bibs in the entire country. The lead content was revealed to be 16 times the level of lead allowed in paint (600 ppm or 0.06 %). As a result of the voluntary recall, the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) issued a simultaneous alert to assist in bringing the matter to the public's attention.

The use of lead in polyvinyl chloride (PVC) or 'vinyl' materials in bibs, inter alia, is well documented. Lead is commonly used either as a stabiliser or pigment to help keep the vinyl stable, softer and more durable.

The major route of exposure to lead is from ingestion. Scientific evidence revealed that prolonged exposure to lead, even in small quantities, could cause developmental problems in young children. Low levels of lead can cause brain and nerve damage, hearing problems, stunted growth and reproductive problems in adults. Children with lead poisoning may have the following symptoms: stomach ache, poor appetite, hyperactivity and headache.



Throughout our global network of laboratories, SGS can offer a range of analytical testing and consultancy services for lead content. Please do not hesitate to contact us for further information.

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