



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Department of Toxic Substances Control

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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State Seeks Input on Pending Lightbulb Toxicity Standard

SACRAMENTO – On May 20, the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) will host a task force meeting in Sacramento with representatives of the lighting manufacturing industry, lamp recyclers, retail store industry, energy utilities and environmental groups along with state and local government. Responding to groundbreaking legislation, Assembly Bill 1109 (Huffman), DTSC convened the task force to discuss cost-efficient and effective methods for California consumers to collect and recycle end-of-life fluorescent light bulbs.

“Environmentally-conscious Californians are using millions of energy-efficient fluorescent lights each year. As these energy conservation efforts continue, those numbers will increase. Our challenge is to combine the message of energy efficiency and environmental protection for residential fluorescent lighting. State law prohibits the disposal of end-of-life fluorescent lights in residential trash because they contain mercury so we must come up with recycling options.” said DTSC Chief Deputy Director Leonard Robinson, chair of the task force. “The Assembly bill establishes a Jan. 10, 2010, prohibition on the sale of light bulbs with hazardous substances above levels set by the European Union. In the interim, bringing together industry and governmental environmental expertise will allow us to explore the collection and recycling options for end-of-life fluorescent lighting and report our findings and recommendations back to the Legislature,” Robinson said.

The State law prohibits manufacturing and selling lighting products containing the dangerous metals lead, cadmium, mercury or hexavalent chromium above limits in use by the European Union. The measure also requires reductions in energy usage for lighting, encourages the use of more efficient lighting technologies, and reduces hazardous waste going into landfills by increasing recycling opportunities.

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Specifically, the legislation prohibits the sale of light bulbs in California after January 10, 2010, if:

- The light bulbs contain hazardous substances above levels prohibited by European Union limits.
- The manufacturer fails to provide required documentation to DTSC.
- The manufacturer fails to provide a required certification to the seller

The measure also requires a manufacturer to certify that lights sold in California do not contain levels of hazardous substances. A manufacturer is allowed to display the certification on the shipping container or packaging to satisfy the requirement.

The task force is charged with making recommendations to the Legislature by Sept. 1 on:

- The most effective, cost-efficient and convenient method for collecting and recycling end-of-life light bulbs;
- Methods to educate and inform consumers about the proper management and collection opportunities for end-of-life light bulbs; and
- Designations on the general purpose light and light packaging for proper recycling and compliance.

The May 20 Task Force meeting will be held in Sacramento at the Cal/EPA Building, 1001 I St., in the Sierra Hearing Room, from 9 a.m. to noon.

For more information about the Task Force go to www.dtsc.ca.gov.

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FOR GENERAL INQUIRIES: Contact the Department of Toxic Substances Control by phone at (800) 728-6942 or visit www.dtsc.ca.gov. To report illegal handling, discharge, or disposal of hazardous waste, call the Waste Alert Hotline at (800) 698-6942.

The mission of the Department of Toxic Substances Control is to protect public health, safety, and the environment from toxic harm.