



News Release

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DTSC Will Host Prestigious Flame Retardants Conference

Hundreds of Leading Scientists Will Discuss Controversial Chemicals That Can Affect Children and Pets

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) will host the Sixth International Symposium on Flame Retardants in San Francisco, April 7-10. The event will take place at the Sir Francis Drake Hotel, 450 Powell St., San Francisco.

The event, held every three years, brings together about 250 experts from more than 20 countries to discuss the issue of flame retardants, including PBDEs (polybrominated diphenyl ethers).

Californians are exposed to toxic flame retardant chemicals daily; flame retardants are widely used in products such as household furniture, textiles and electronic equipment. These chemicals can escape from products, contaminate homes and offices, and accumulate in people and animals. They disrupt hormonal functions and have neurological and developmental effects. Some flame retardants are known to cause cancer. (See [video](#)).

“DTSC is proud to host this international conference,” said Myrto Petreas, a senior scientist at DTSC’s Environmental Chemistry Lab, who is also the chair of the conference. “California is a fitting place to host the conference since this is the state where record levels of flame retardants were first reported in humans and wildlife. Our team of scientists has contributed to a better understanding of the extent and magnitude of the problem.”

Last year California proposed changes that would overhaul the use of these toxic chemicals in furniture. If approved, furniture manufacturers would be required to use alternatives to toxic flame retardants in their products by July of 2014.

This is the first time the conference will occur in the United States. Previous locations for the conference include Japan, the Netherlands and Canada.

DTSC director Debbie Raphael will give the opening remarks along with Cal/EPA Secretary for Science and Health Gina Solomon. The main focus of the event is to bring international experts together to discuss the latest developments in the science and policy of flame retardants.

Visit the website for more information at www.bfr2013.com.



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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 DTSC is to protect California's people and environment from harmful effects of toxic substances by restoring contaminated properties, identifying and promoting safer ingredients in consumer products, and ensuring stewardship through enforcement, regulation and pollution prevention.