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California adds styrene to Prop 65 list

[Background: California EPA's Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) announced Feb. 27, 2015 its intent to add styrene to the list of chemicals "known to the state of California to cause cancer" under the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986, better known as Proposition 65 (Prop 65). OEHHA said its decision to add styrene was based on the chemical's June 2011 listing as "reasonably anticipated to be a human carcinogen" in the U.S. National Toxicology Program's (NTP's) 12th *Report on Carcinogens (RoC)*. Using NTP as an "authoritative body," OEHHA said styrene should be listed. This action is distinct from previous attempts to list styrene under the "labor code" mechanism, which were withdrawn by OEHHA in 2013 and 2014. On March 26, 2015, SIRC filed detailed [comments](#) objecting to listing styrene based on the NTP RoC classification.]

The following statement concerning the OEHHA action may be attributed in whole or in part to Jack Snyder, executive director of the Styrene Information and Research Center (SIRC).

Washington, D.C., April 22, 2016 – Styrene has been added to California's Proposition 65 list of chemicals "known to the state" to cause cancer, despite scientific evidence disproving an exposure link to cancer in humans.

As we noted in our [comments](#) submitted after OEHHA announced its intent to list, SIRC does not believe the criteria used in NTP's Report on Carcinogens adequately aligns with and supports the Prop 65 listing criteria under the "authoritative body" mechanism.

In addition to our comments, SIRC had asked OEHHA to consider new, preliminary evidence from a two-year study scheduled for completion later this year, but procedural and timing limitations prevented its review prior to OEHHA's final decision to list. This data will be further analyzed, summarized, and submitted for publication before the end of 2016. SIRC will review the final study results and determine whether the conclusions of that study, coupled with other studies published after NTP listed styrene in the Report on Carcinogens, more definitively support removal of styrene from the Prop 65 list at that time. SIRC will consider all feasible options.

We believe [a Prop 65 listing](#) has the potential to result in unnecessary public alarm concerning the safety of the thousands of products made from styrene and styrene-based resins. Consumers can and should continue to use those products with confidence in their safety.

For more information on styrene, how it is manufactured and used, its safety for consumers and industry employees, and current research, visit www.styrene.org and www.youknowstyrene.org. For information on the safety of polystyrene food services products, visit www.plasticsfoodservicefacts.com.

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SIRC's March 26, 2015 comments to OEHHA: <http://styrene.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/SIRC-Prop-65-NOIL-Comments-2015-03-26-1.pdf>