

WHY WE SHOULD EXPEL TOXIC CHEMICALS FROM OUR CAMPUS:

1. *Buying flame retardant-free furniture deepens our commitment to a healthy environment for our community:*

Our university strives to provide a welcoming and safe environment for students, faculty, staff, alumni, and visitors. A welcoming environment should especially support the health and development of students. By choosing furniture without these unnecessary and toxic flame retardant chemicals, we can pursue our commitment to the well-being of our campus and our community.

2. *Our university can be a leader in this important health issue:*

We would be joining leading organizations including Kaiser Permanente, Harvard University, Hackensack University Medical Center, Blue Cross Blue Shield of MA, the City of Portland, Facebook, Genentech, and others who have committed to purchase furniture without toxic flame retardant chemicals. The move to flame retardant-free furniture would contribute to our sustainability efforts and distinguish us as an important sustainability leader.

3. *Furniture foam treated with flame retardants has not been found to improve fire safety:*

Studies by the Consumer Product Safety Commission have consistently shown that foam treated with flame retardants does not provide an added safety benefit. Foam with flame retardant chemicals actually increases smoldering propensity when compared to non-flame retardant foam.

4. *Flame retardant chemicals may actually make fires less survivable:*

When some flame retardants burn they give off higher levels of toxic gases, carbon monoxide, soot, and smoke than untreated furniture. Inhalation of toxic gases is actually the leading cause of fire deaths.

5. *Flame retardant chemicals are associated with a wide range of serious health effects:*

Flame retardant chemicals migrate out of furniture and into the environment, entering our bodies through hand to mouth contact and inhalation. Many flame retardants are associated with serious health effects, including decreased fertility, hormone disruption, reduced IQ, diabetes, obesity, and cancer. We should especially reduce exposure of flame retardant chemicals for young adults in reproductive years.

6. *Flame retardant chemicals also contaminate the environment and wildlife:*

Flame retardants are transported atmospherically in the outdoor environment and have been found all over the globe. These persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic chemicals have been found to contaminate air, wastewater, landfill leachates, soil, rivers, oceans, fish, marine mammals and the food supply.

7. *Flame retardant-free furniture is cost-neutral, more durable & comfortable:*

Flame retardant free furniture is a winning sustainability and cost savings effort. It offers the needed fire safety at NO extra cost, is more durable and has a more comfortable "sit." Industry experts report that flame retardants degrade the foam more quickly and make the foam harder. Increased longevity of furniture equals added cost savings.

8. *Flame retardant-free furniture protects our firefighters and first responders:*

Toxic smoke produced by the combustion of products treated with flame retardants contain potent carcinogens that put firefighters at increased risk for cancer. These cancers include non-Hodgkins lymphoma, multiple myeloma, prostate and testicular cancer. A recent study of San Francisco female firefighters found that they experienced breast cancer at rates six times higher than the national average.

Let's kick toxins out!



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