Flame Retardants in Baby Products: What You Can Do

What’s the problem with flame retardants?
Flame retardant chemicals are added to the foam of baby products and furniture to meet the California Standard Technical Bulletin 117 (TB117).

They have been linked with:
- Reduced IQ
- Learning Disorders
- Reduced Fertility
- Thyroid disruption
- Cancer

How are we exposed?
An average American home can contain pound levels of these chemicals. They have been detected in the bodies of nearly all North Americans tested.

1) Chemicals leak from products into dust

2) Dust gets on hands and food

3) Hands and food get put into mouths

Who is most vulnerable?
Fetuses, infants, and toddlers are the most vulnerable because of their hand-to-mouth behavior and proximity to the floor. They are also most vulnerable to the toxic effects of the chemicals since their organs are still developing.

Do they prevent fires?
The California standard TB117 has not been shown to improve fire safety and is thus presenting an unnecessary health hazard.

- Baby products do not pose a fire hazard
- According to the National Fire Protection Association, their use in California has not led to a measurable improvement in fire safety
- Flame retardants may decrease fire safety since they increase the amount of carbon monoxide and toxic gases produced when a product does burn

Why are they still used in baby products and furniture?
The producers of the flame retardant chemicals spend millions of dollars lobbying at the state and federal levels to create and maintain regulations like TB117 which are favorable to their industry.
**What should be done?**

Demand toxic-free products for your family
Sample letters at:
www.greensciencepolicy.org/safekids

1) **Tell the California Bureau** that implements the
TB17 standard that needs to be updated so products
are fire-safe and non-toxic. Contact:

Bureau of Electronic and Appliance Repair,
Home Furnishings and Thermal Insulation
Email: homeproducts@dca.ca.gov
Phone: (916) 574-2041
Fax: (916) 574-2043
3485 Orange Grove Avenue
North Highlands, California 95660

2) **Contact California state Senators and Assembly Members** and demand to be able to choose fire safe
and non-toxic products for your family. Your voice
does matter.
Legislators contact information:
www.leginfo.ca.gov/yourleg.html

**About Us**

The **Green Science Policy Institute** (GSP) provides unbiased scientific information to facilitate
more informed decision-making about chemicals used in consumer products in order to protect
health and environment worldwide.

Our Accomplishments include contributing to:
- Preventing over a billion pounds of unneeded flame retardants in electronic housings each year
- Suspending California TB604, a proposed flammability standard for bed coverings and pillows
- US Green Building Council LEED Pilot Credit for not using halogenated flame retardants inside buildings

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With thanks to the San Francisco Foundation for their generous support of our work

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**How to protect your family**

1) Keep dust levels down by **wet mopping** and **vacuuming** with a HEPA filter

2) **Wash your hands** and those of your children often, as hand-
to-mouth contact exposes us to flame retardants in dust

3) Purchase baby products and furniture filled with **cotton, polyester, or wool** instead of polyurethane foam

4) Avoid products that use polyurethane foam and have a **TB17 label** which likely contain chemical flame retardants

5) **Contact manufacturers** to inquire whether retardants were added to products

Some manufacturers that state products do not contain halogenated flame retardants:

**BabyLuxe** organic pads and mattresses
**BabyBjorn** baby carriers
**OrbitBaby** strollers and car seats
**Boppy** nursing pillows

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**Products we tested**

80% of the products we tested contained toxic or
untested flame retardants.
Products with these retardants detected included:
**nursing pillows, car seats, sleeping wedges, portable crib mattresses, baby carriers, strollers, and changing table pads**.