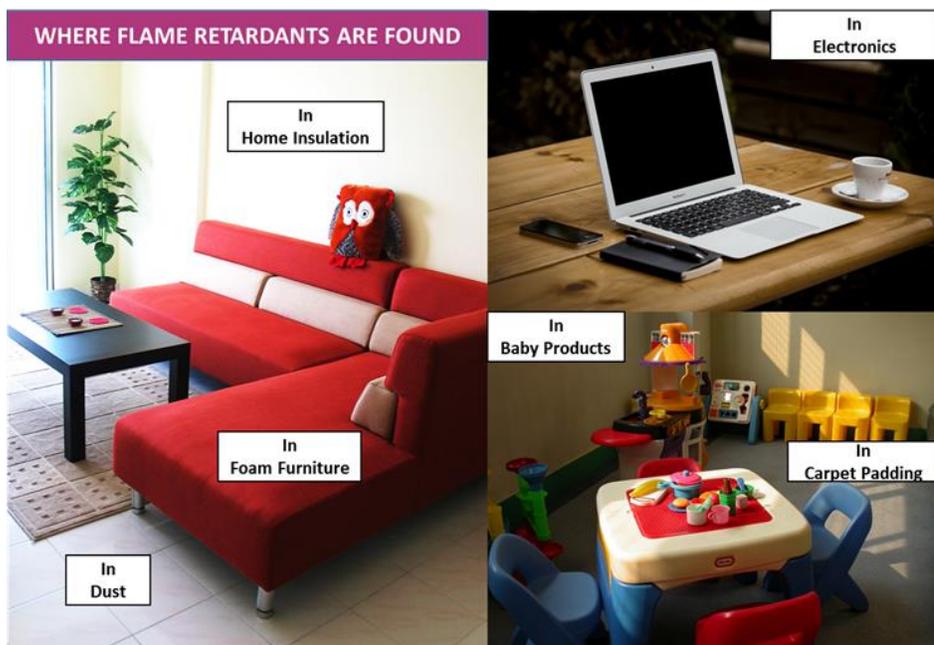


The purpose of this guide is to help childcare providers purchase safer products that avoid introducing flame retardants and phthalates to their facility. Flame retardants have been linked to hormonal disruption, neurodevelopmental problems, and cancer, while providing no additional fire safety benefits. In fact, fire fighters are playing a major role in helping to remove these toxic chemicals from products in our homes. Phthalates are chemicals added to soften plastic, particularly vinyl, and are used to prolong the scents in fragrances. Phthalate exposure is linked to endocrine disruption in young boys and enhanced onset of allergic diseases.

### Where are Flame Retardants and Phthalates found?



### Children's Furniture

Prior to the 2015 introduction of a new fire safety regulation, TB 117-2013, most furniture required flame retardants. The new regulation makes it easier to create products without them and still meet the standard. Product labels now indicate if flame retardants are used in the production of a piece of furniture. Additionally, under the new regulations, some children's products are exempted from the flammability standard: bassinets, booster seats, changing pads, floor play mats, highchairs, highchair pads, infant bouncers, infant carriers, infant seats, infant swings, infant walkers, nursing pads, nursing pillows, playpen side pads, playards, portable hook-on chairs, and strollers. However, retailers can still sell their existing stock of old, flame retardant containing products until it is exhausted. **Read the labels carefully.**

### What We've Done

We have tested 14 different used products from childcares in Massachusetts and 14 newly purchased items. We've attempted to find safer replacement for all products that tested positive to flame retardants or phthalates. Additionally, we've contacted dozen of companies, examined their websites, and reviewed their product certificate of compliance to come up with our recommendations.



# Furniture Labels

**BEST**

NOTICE  
THIS ARTICLE MEETS THE FLAMMABILITY REQUIREMENTS OF CALIFORNIA BUREAU OF ELECTRONIC AND APPLIANCE REPAIR, HOME FURNISHINGS AND THERMAL INSULATION TECHNICAL BULLETIN 117-2013. CARE SHOULD BE EXERCISED NEAR OPEN FLAME OR WITH BURNING CIGARETTES.

The upholstery materials in this product:  
contain added flame retardant chemicals  
**X** contain NO added flame retardant chemicals

The State of California has updated the flammability standard and determined the fire safety requirements for this product can be met without adding flame retardant chemicals. The State has identified many flame retardant chemicals as being known to, or strongly suspected of, adversely impacting human health or development.

Furniture made after January 1, 2015 will have the "Technical Bulletin 117-2013" label AND the new flame retardant label

Look for the labels marked "contain NO added flame retardant chemicals"



**WORST**

NOTICE  
THIS ARTICLE MEETS THE FLAMMABILITY REQUIREMENTS OF CALIFORNIA BUREAU OF ELECTRONIC AND APPLIANCE REPAIR, HOME FURNISHINGS AND THERMAL INSULATION **TECHNICAL BULLETIN 117.** CARE SHOULD BE EXERCISED NEAR OPEN FLAME OR WITH BURNING CIGARETTES.

Furniture made from 1975-2014 may have a "Technical Bulletin 117" or "TB 117" label ONLY

The product almost certainly contains flame retardant chemicals



Source: NRDC (Veena Singla), [www.nrdc.org](http://www.nrdc.org)

## Product Categories Recommendations

### Nap Mats:

Napmats are a source of exposure to toxic flame retardants. Our test data supports the conclusion that almost all nap mats containing polyurethane foam manufactured before 1/1/2015 contain flame retardants. However, there are alternatives. We tested 5 different mats newly purchased from Discount School Supply and found all of them to be free of flame retardants. Brands that offer new flame retardant-free mats include ECR4Kids (Rainbow Rest Mats) and Angeles (4 different types). Old mats produced by Angeles do contain flame retardant though. Since most nap mats have a vinyl covering, there is a potential for them to contain phthalates. We did find very low levels of phthalates in all the mats we tested, with the exception of the Angeles 2" Super Rest Mat. **Recommendation: Buy new, Safer Options: Angeles 2" Super Rest Mat or MamaDoo Kids Big Kid Sleep Mat.**

For more information please contact Ryan Bouldin, Assistant Professor of Sustainable Chemistry, Bentley University at [rbouldin@bentley.edu](mailto:rbouldin@bentley.edu).

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### Playards or Pack n' Play®:

A playard is a good example of a product that should be purchased new, instead of at a second hand store. Traditionally, playards were required to contain flame retardants, however playards manufactured after 1/1/2015 are exempt from flammability standards. We tested two new affordable playards from Babies R' Us (Infinity Matrix) and Graco (On the Go) and both came back as flame retardant-free. **Recommendation: Buy new, Safer Options: Graco On the Go Pack n' Play®, Baby Bjorn Travel Crib Light, Guava Family Lotus Travel Crib**

### Changing Pads:

Changing pads, like playards traditionally were required to contain flame retardants, however after 1/1/2015 they are exempt from flammability standards. We tested 3 pads, 1 from Dream on Me and 2 from Babies R' Us brand. Unfortunately, all of the pads we tested came back positive for flame retardants, including the one Babies R' Us pad manufactured after the exemption deadline. **Recommendation: Avoid purchasing second hand or Babies R' Us branded changing pads. Safer Options: Moonlight Slumber Starlight Support Flat Changing Pad**

### Gloves:

Gloves used at a changing station or in food preparation are a potential source of phthalate exposure for children. Nitrile and vinyl gloves we tested contained no phthalates; however nitrile gloves are strongly recommended over those made of vinyl. Vinyl materials, in general, are heavily associated with the use of phthalates and should be avoided when possible. **Recommendation: Nitrile gloves, Safer Option: Halyard Health Sterling Nitrile Gloves**

### Infant Bouncers and Swings:

Our testing results came back negative for flame retardants in the 2 bouncers and the swing we tested. As most of the cushioning is provided by a polyester batting instead of polyurethane foam, they are unlikely to contain flame retardants. Bouncers and Swing are now exempt from flame retardant requirements, thus they may not carry a flammability label. **Recommendation: Buy polyester fill and upholstered products.**

### High Chairs:

Our flame retardant testing results came back negative for the highchairs and highchair covers we tested. Similarly to bouncers and swings most of the cushioning is provided by a polyester batting; thus they are unlikely to contain flame retardants. Highchairs are now exempt from flame retardant requirements (TB-117-2013), thus they may not carry a flammability label. **Recommendation: Buy polyester based products. PVC or vinyl coverings should be avoided due to potential presence of phthalates.**