



KEMISK-TEKNISKA LEVERANTÖRFÖRBUNDET  
THE SWEDISH COSMETIC, TOILETRY AND DETERGENT ASSOCIATION

Press information from KTF:

## **Phthalates in cosmetics - No risk to human health**

---

The Swedish Cosmetic, toiletry and detergent association (KTF) notices that Swedish media today, Thursday 14 November, refers to a report made by the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (also known as SNF) concerning phthalates in cosmetic and hygiene products.

### **The use of phthalates is regulated and required, not banned**

Media states that phthalates are banned in cosmetic and hygiene products. The cosmetic regulations say, on the contrary, that they should be used in the denaturation of alcohol (Swedish regulation LVFS 1995:2). There are today four approved methods of alcohol denaturation (to make undrinkable). Two of those include diethyl phthalate (DEP) and all four methods are considered as equally safe to the consumers according to the authorities.

### **Why use phthalates in cosmetics?**

The alcohol that is used in certain cosmetic and hygiene products is of the same kind as the alcohol found in for example beer, wine and spirits. According to Swedish law the alcohol that is not sold via the so-called Systembolaget must be made undrinkable (denaturised). The law is the result of concern of alcohol abusers and to reduce the accessibility to alcohol for workers in the alcohol manufacturing industry.

One of the most common denaturants in alcohol used in cosmetic products is diethyl phthalate (DEP), which should not be confused with other phthalates used as plastic softeners.

DEP is used in small quantities in alcohol in cosmetic and hygiene products to give them an intense tang and therefore making them difficult to consume.

### **Safety aspects**

Negative effects of DEP as a denaturant have not been shown. The use of DEP is of course approved in the EU and by the Swedish MPA, which is the competent authority on cosmetic and hygiene products (please see regulation LVFS 1995:2 and 1999:9 respectively).

Furthermore, the safety of all cosmetic products is regulated through the European Cosmetics Directive (76/768/EEC). According to this directive all manufacturing companies must perform a safety assessment on every product that is put on the internal market. The competent authorities of each member state can access these assessments.

The European cosmetic industry believes that the human health aspect of cosmetics is of the highest concern and therefore fully cooperates with the Commission and its expert committee. This also means contributing relevant research data.

KTF is of the opinion that it is unfortunate that Swedish media gives incorrect information on phthalates in cosmetic and hygiene products.

The mentioned phthalates have been thoroughly studied and all results point to levels of phthalates that are far below levels that can affect human health.

The consumers can safely continue to use the products in question.

---

For more information, please contact:

Peter Jansson

[peter.jansson@ktf.se](mailto:peter.jansson@ktf.se)

+46-8-7838245, +46-70-825 08 48

Olof Holmer

[olof.holmer@ktf.se](mailto:olof.holmer@ktf.se)

+46-8-7838243, +46-70-950 70 19