

FACT SHEET

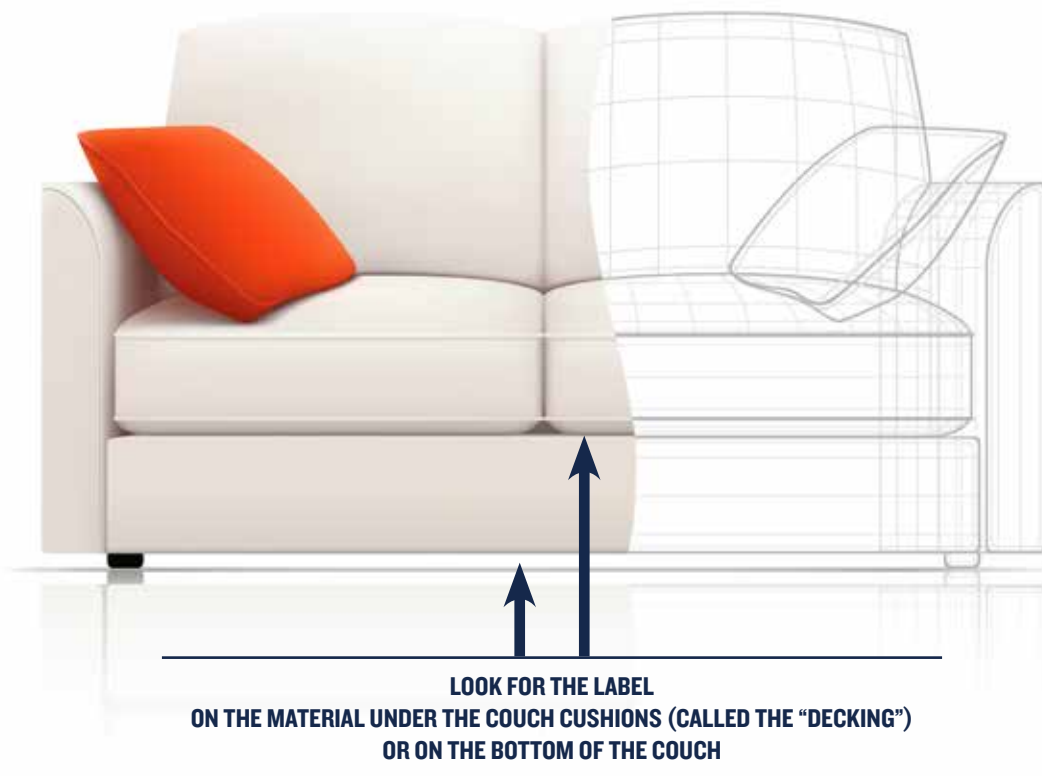
NEW LABELS EXPOSE TOXIC COUCH CHEMICALS

For nearly 40 years, an antiquated California regulation caused sofas, couches, and chairs across the country to be loaded with pounds of toxic chemicals known as “flame retardants.” These chemicals are linked to serious health risks such as cancer, hyperactivity, and reduced intelligent quotient (IQ) levels. But there’s good news for people that want to buy safer, healthier furniture! First, thanks to the work of NRDC and many others, California updated the regulation in 2013 to provide better fire safety without the need to use toxic flame retardant chemicals. Fire safety experts agree that the chemicals aren’t needed in furniture. Second, NRDC and others championed California legislation that requires labels on furniture to clearly state whether or not flame retardant chemicals are added, starting in 2015.

While the new label is only required in California, stores across the country are adding the label to their furniture. But not all furniture in stores will have the simple flame retardant label because the labeling law only applies to new furniture made in 2015 or later. Furniture made before 2015 will not have the label and may or may not contain flame retardant chemicals.

Here’s what to look for before you buy.

The label is usually located underneath the furniture or under the cushions.





THE THREE DIFFERENT KINDS OF LABELS AND WHAT THEY MEAN:

#1 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
- 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.

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

Furniture made after January 1, 2015 will have the "Technical Bulletin 117-2013" label AND the new flame retardant label. These may be two separate labels.

#2 ASK QUESTIONS

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 product may or may not contain flame retardant chemicals. Ask the store or check with the manufacturer.

Furniture made in 2014 may have a "Technical Bulletin 117-2013" or "TB 117-2013" label ONLY.

#3 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.

The product almost certainly contains flame retardant chemicals.

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

"Toxic flame retardants are found in everything from high chairs to couches and a growing body of evidence suggests that these chemicals harm human health and the environment. We must find better ways to meet fire safety standards by reducing and eliminating—wherever possible—dangerous chemicals."

-California Governor Jerry Brown¹

¹ Press release from the office of Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr. Governor Brown directs state agencies to revise flammability standard. Accessed August 15, 2014 from <http://gov.ca.gov/news.php?id=17598>.