

Washington state's first-in-the-nation ban on toxic bisphenols in receipts takes effect

Rule protects cashiers, shoppers, families from hormone-disrupting chemicals; New data show many major retailers have already restricted bisphenols nationwide

OLYMPIA, WA, UNITED STATES, January 13, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On

January 1, 2026, [a new rule took effect](#)

in Washington state banning all

bisphenols in receipt paper, prioritizing

the health of people and safer solutions. This makes Washington the first state in the nation to take this action.



Millions of people handle receipts every day from restaurants, retailers, and pharmacies. This

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has been a hidden source of exposure to bisphenols.

These chemicals even rub off onto money. Cashiers and other retail workers face especially high risks, because the chemicals transfer from paper to skin. The new rules, adopted under the state's Safer Products law, applies to thermal receipt paper, as well as thermal paper used for tickets and labels.

“This is what health-protective policy looks like,” said Cheri Peele, director of government and market policy at Toxic-Free Future. “By banning all bisphenols in receipts, Washington is putting people's health first and stopping toxic chemicals before they reach workers' hands and

families' homes. Just as importantly, the state determined there are safer alternatives available—and that we don't have to accept outdated harmful chemicals as the cost of doing business.”

[A recent survey](#) by Toxic-Free Future shows major retailers are ready. It found that 18 out of the 46 major retailers have restricted bisphenols in receipts nationally. These retailers are Ahold Delhaize, Best Buy, Chipotle, Costco, CVS Health, Dick's Sporting Goods, Five Below, The Home

Depot, Kohl's, Office Depot, PCC Community Markets, REI, Starbucks, Target, TJX Companies, Trader Joe's, Walgreens, and Whole Foods Market. Some retailers have moved towards safer solutions identified by Washington state, while several others have failed to disclose the alternative they are utilizing. More than half of the retailers (28 out of 46) surveyed either did not respond to Toxic-Free Future's inquiries or have not previously disclosed action restricting bisphenols in receipts nationally.

"Retailers have shown that safer receipt paper is already on the market and widely in use," said Dana Floberg, Mind the Store program manager at Toxic-Free Future. "Washington's action reflects what we're seeing across the retail sector: companies can move away from toxic bisphenols towards safer and affordable solutions."

Bisphenols have been widely used in thermal paper coatings, but research has linked exposure to these chemicals to endocrine disruption, reproductive harm, metabolic disorders, and developmental effects. While bisphenol A (also known as BPA) has been phased out in some products such as baby bottles and sippy cups, manufacturers have often substituted BPA for other bisphenols such as BPS, that raise similar health concerns—a practice known as "regrettable substitution."

A 2023 study by Michigan-based nonprofit Ecology Center found bisphenols in 80% of paper receipts from large retailers—which actually represented a significant decline from 2017, when researchers found bisphenols in 93% of receipts.

"Our research has shown that receipts and labels made of thermal paper are very common but avoidable sources of bisphenol exposure," said Gillian Miller, PhD, senior scientist at the Ecology Center. "Washington's decision to ban all bisphenols in thermal receipts and labels reflects both the science and what we are seeing in stores. When safer alternatives are available, there is no reason for workers and consumers to continue being exposed to these harmful chemicals."

By banning all bisphenols, Washington's policy stops the practice of replacing one bisphenol with another closely related chemical and sets a new national benchmark for science-based regulation.

The ban is part of the state's landmark Safer Products for Washington law, which targets some of the most hazardous chemicals used in consumer products, including bisphenols, PFAS, and phthalates. Exposure to these chemicals comes with substantial, and largely preventable, costs for families, workers, and taxpayers. A recent study found that toxic chemicals like bisphenols, phthalates, pesticides, and PFAS drive up to \$3 trillion each year in health-related costs. The research also shows that when governments set clear, health-protective rules, industries adapt quickly and often at lower costs than anticipated.

ABOUT SAFER PRODUCTS FOR WASHINGTON

The Safer Products for Washington Act is the nation's strongest law regulating toxic chemicals in

consumer products—a major source of contamination in homes, workplaces, and the environment. Passed in 2019, the law directs state agencies to identify products that are significant sources of high-priority chemicals and gives the Washington State Department of Ecology the authority to restrict or require disclosure of toxic chemicals when safer alternatives are available.

TOXIC-FREE FUTURE

Toxic-Free Future is a national leader in environmental health research and advocacy. Through the power of science, education, and activism, Toxic-Free Future drives strong laws and corporate responsibility that protects the health of all people and the planet.

toxicfreefuture.org

SAFER STATES

Safer States is a national alliance of environmental health organizations and coalitions from across the nation working to safeguard people and the planet from toxic chemicals, and to ensure availability of safer solutions for a healthier world. Led by state-based organizations, the alliance seeks government and corporate action that lead to safer chemicals and materials, and protection of public health and communities by transitioning away from harmful chemicals and holding chemical polluters accountable. saferstates.org

Press Release: <https://toxicfreefuture.org/press-room/washington-states-first-in-the-nation-ban-on-toxic-bisphenols-in-receipts-takes-effect/>

Blog and survey data: <https://toxicfreefuture.org/blog/weve-got-receipts-retailers-leave-toxic-bisphenols-behind-in-the-new-year/>

Stephanie Stohler

Toxic-Free Future / Safer States

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