

Safer Hair Products for People of Color: Ingredient Analysis and Washington State Regulations

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What we do



Scientific
Research



Policy
Advocacy



Market
Transformation

Essential Elements for a Healthier Future



**Corporate &
Government
Responsibility**



Transparency



**Ban
the Bad**



**Safer
Solutions**



Accountability

The problem

- Chemicals linked to cancer and developmental and reproductive harm are used in cosmetics
- Hazardous chemicals in cosmetics include PFAS, phthalates, formaldehyde and formaldehyde-releasers
- Communities of color disproportionately impacted
 - Regular use of hair dye by black women resulted in a 60% increase in breast cancer¹
 - Increased risk of uterine cancer in women who used hair straightening products²

¹<https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/permanent-hair-dye-straighteners-may-increase-breast-cancer-risk>

²<https://academic.oup.com/jnci/article/114/12/1636/6759686?login=false>

Context

- Retailer Report Card
- Know Better Do Better collaborative
- Washington Toxic Free Cosmetic Act
- Safer Products for WA
- Partners:
 - ChemFORWARD
 - Clearya
 - WE ACT for Environmental Justice





Goal:
Characterize beauty
and personal care
products marketed to
people of color

Methodology: Sally Beauty website



- Likely to provide one of the widest ranges of products marketed to people of color
 - Very large: >3,700 stores worldwide
 - No chemicals policy, unlike many competitors (e.g., Sephora, Ulta Beauty, Target, Walmart)
 - Retailer commitment to serve its diverse customer base
 - Consistent failing grades in the Retailer Report Card



2017	2018	2019	2021	2024
F	F	F	F	F

Methodology: Identify products marketed to people of color



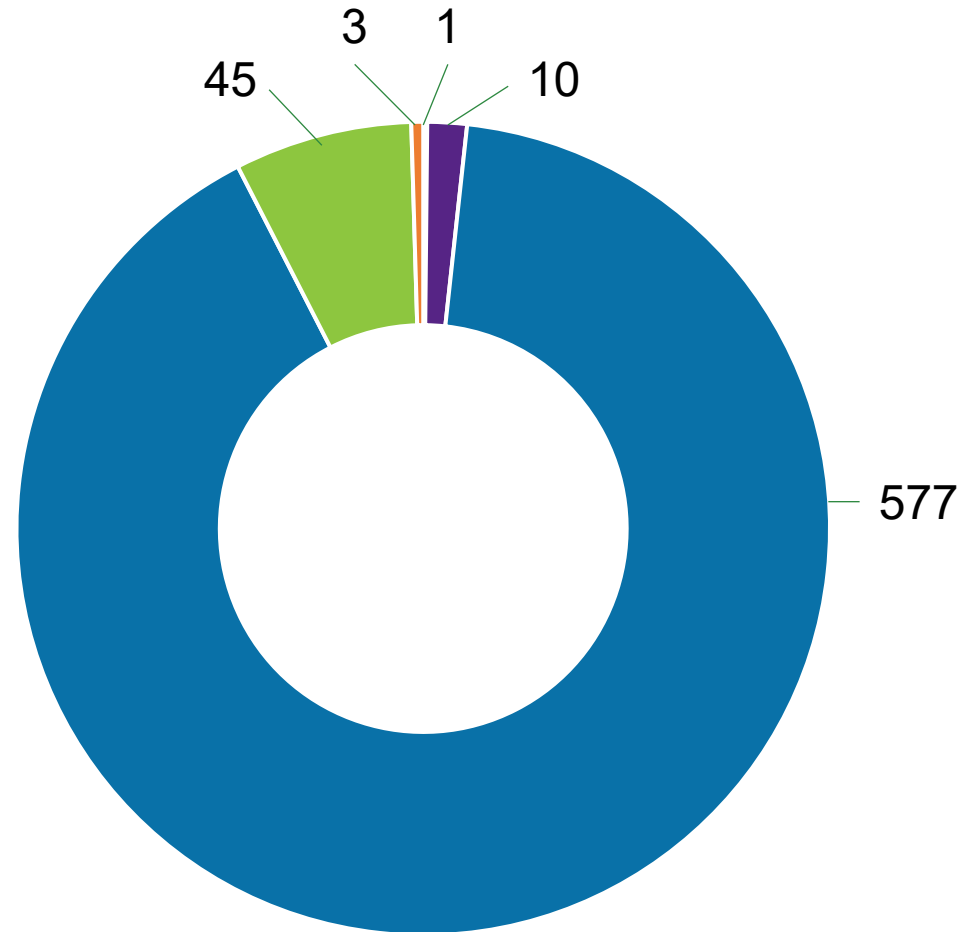
- **Scope of possible products:** Formulated consumer products
- **Identification of target product categories:** Collaboration by Toxic-Free Future, WE ACT, and Clearya
- **AI model:** Built by Clearya to identify products
- **Manual supplement:** Additional products identified by TFF, WE ACT

Methodology: Ingredient review



- Based on labels
- Intentionally added ingredients, not including fragrances
- ChemFORWARD assessment of known hazards

Dataset: 644 products



■ Bath & Shower ■ Body Care ■ Hair Care ■ Makeup ■ Skincare



**Outcomes:
Focus on
products for
curly & coily hair**

ChemFORWARD Summary



	2024 Aggregate	BIPOC
Characterization	76%	71.4%
Safer Ingredients	71%	61.5%
Chemicals of Concern	3.7%	3.2%
Uncharacterized	24%	28.6%
In Process	0.7%	4.1%

Products with Formaldehyde Releasers



- 2024 Aggregate: 1.8%
- BIPOC: 14.6%
- Found in 1 in 8 hair products
- Banned in Washington State as of 2027
- Carcinogen, skin sensitizer, associated with asthma



Products with cyclic volatile methylsiloxanes (D4, D5, D6)



- 41 (1 in 14) hair products
- Banned in European Union
- Currently being assessed for restriction in WA
- Linked to:
 - Cancer
 - Developmental & reproductive toxicity
 - Endocrine disruption
 - Liver toxicity

Next steps



- Retailer has not responded to request for meeting framed as regulatory compliance
- Released report with findings for hair products, accompanied by blog, press release
- Action alert calls for Sally Beauty to restrict across platform:
 - Formaldehyde & formaldehyde releasers
 - Cyclic volatile methysiloxanes
 - >1,000 messages, from every state, sent to date



Washington State

Safer Products for Washington

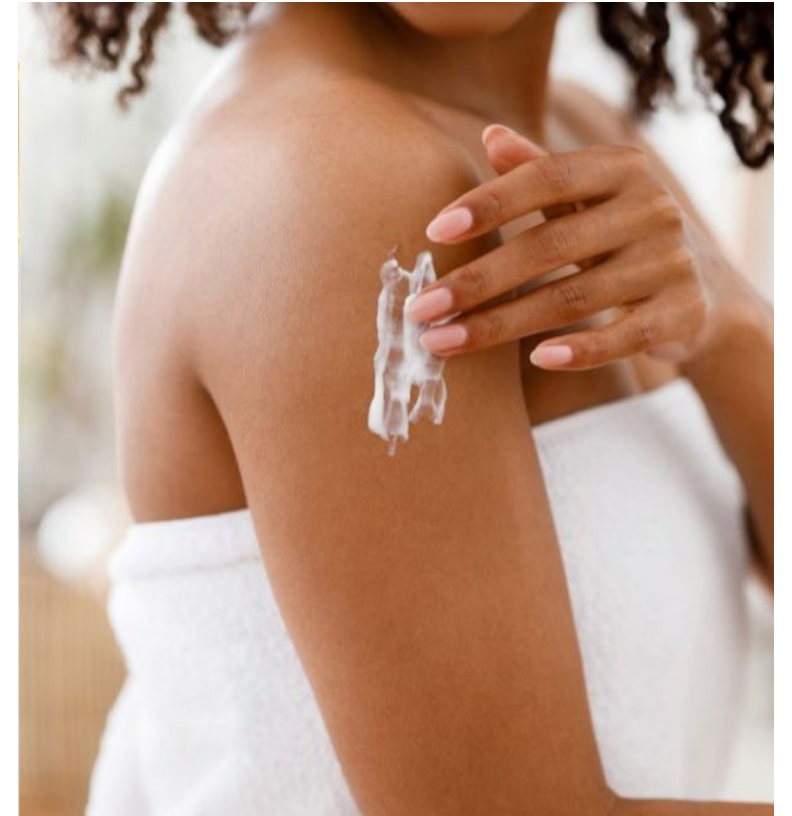


- **Restricted**

- Fragrances in beauty & personal care products
Orthophthalates

- **Currently assessing safer alternatives:**

- **Cosmetics:**
Cyclic volatile methylsiloxanes (D4, D5, D6)
- **Nail products:**
Benzene, ethyl benzene, toluene & xylene substances



WA Toxic-Free Cosmetic Act Restrictions



- Formaldehyde & formaldehyde releasers
- Lead & lead compounds
- Mercury & mercury compounds
- Methylene glycol
- Ortho-phthalates
- PFAS
- m-Phenylenediamine and its salts
- o-Phenylenediamine and its salts
- Triclosan

WA Toxic-Free Cosmetic Act Incentives



- Safer Salons Partnership
 - Cosmetologists
 - Reimbursement for safer products
 - Maximum \$5k
- Small Cosmetics Manufacturer Certification Subsidy
 - 50 or fewer employees
 - Reimbursement for costs related to product certification
 - Maximum \$30k



Thank you!

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