



## New California Formaldehyde Regulation in Perspective

California has tightened allowable formaldehyde emissions from composite wood products. The ruling comes from the California Air Resources Board (CARB).

### The new limitations mean:

- Beginning with the implementation of Phase I on January 1, 2009, there will be stricter limits on formaldehyde emitted from raw composite wood panels and finished wood products sold or used in California.
- The CARB regulation applies to imported and domestic hardwood plywood, particleboard and medium density fiberboard (MDF) and all constructed products, such as furniture, cabinets and flooring.
- When Phase II is enacted in 2012, California will have the world's toughest formaldehyde emissions standards.

### Certification and enforcement of California's standards will also be extremely rigorous.

- All of the ceilings are maximum limits that 100 percent of products must fall below, unlike other worldwide standards that allow a certain percentage of products to exceed the limits.
- CARB plans to use and enforce a third-party certification process through random product testing and a strict chain-of-custody requirement.

**Hexion Specialty Chemicals, Inc.**  
180 East Broad Street  
Columbus, OH 43215 USA  
+1 614 225 4000

For worldwide locations visit [hexion.com](http://hexion.com)

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The following chart provides a comparison.

Emissions Standard	Maximum Emission Level (parts per million)
European E1	0.14
Japanese F***	0.09*
Japanese F****	0.05*
Composite Panel Association (CPA) EPP	0.20
CARB Phase I (2009)	0.18 (Particleboard) 0.21 (Medium Density Fiberboard)
CARB Phase II (2011)	0.09 (Particleboard) 0.11 (Medium Density Fiberboard)

\* Standard applies only to structural building materials and built-in cabinets

- Distributors, manufacturers or retailers that use and/or sell composite wood products will have to follow prescribed record keeping and labeling requirements currently being developed by CARB.
- Although the California regulation applies only to products sold in that state, a number of other states are considering adopting emission standards similar to California's. In addition, since it's difficult to maintain separate inventories by state and track where products go, most manufacturers will probably choose to adopt the CARB ceilings as their de facto domestic standard.

### While the new regulations will mean additional challenges and costs for manufacturers, there is no cause for alarm.

- Formaldehyde has safely been used in composite wood products for more

than 50 years. Current emissions are very low: less than 5% of all formaldehyde in the California air, for example. CARB's ruling simply sets stricter emission limits.

- The newest risk assessment information shows that there is virtually no risk from formaldehyde at the levels most people are exposed to over their lifetimes.
- The industry has developed technologies to meet the California standards, without sacrificing quality or plant production.

For more information on how to meet the new regulation with EcoBind™ Resin Technology from Hexion™ Specialty Chemicals, please visit [ecobind.com](http://ecobind.com).

Resins made with EcoBind Resin Technology meet or exceed the most stringent global emissions standards.