

Important Facts About PVC (Polyvinyl Chloride)

- PVC, also known as vinyl, is one of the most widely used types of plastics, used for packaging and to make plastic bottles. It is also used in credit cards, window frames and cables, imitation leather; some types of flooring, wallpaper and blinds, car interiors, children's toys, IV bags and shower curtains.
- PVC is a major source of hazardous substances in the environment, both during manufacture and disposal.
- During the production of PVC, dioxins, one of the most toxic chemicals known, are created and released. At the end of its lifetime, PVC must be either burned or buried. Burning PVC releases dioxins and hydrochloric acid, which contributes to acid rain that can contaminate land and water.
- Dioxins are extremely long-lived in the environment, and, because they are fat soluble, they concentrate in the tissues of humans and others species.
- PVC is difficult and expensive to recycle, so much of it ends up in landfills where, over time, harmful additives, such as phthalates, can leak.
- Plastics, including those made from PVC, contribute to the volume of non-organic materials in landfills that are not easily degradable.
- Phthalates and other chemicals added to PVC to make it soft and flexible have been linked to cancer and kidney and liver damage. These chemicals can also interfere with the reproductive system and development.
- According to the Environmental News Network, PVC is listed as one of the 10 most dangerous toxins in the home.