

Sample University Policy to Reduce and Phase Out PVC

A Toolkit & Guide to Action for Student Activists

Sample University Policy to Reduce and Phase Out PVC

ABC University/College is concerned about the production, use and disposal of polyvinyl chloride (PVC) plastic. The lifecycle of PVC leads to the use or release of highly hazardous chemicals including carcinogens, reproductive toxicants, neurotoxicants, endocrine disrupters, and persistent bioaccumulative toxic (PBT) chemicals. This includes vinyl chloride, ethylene dichloride, dioxins, lead, mercury, phthalates, and organotins.

ABC University/College takes the environmental health issues surrounding PVC seriously and is working to reduce and phase out PVC in office supplies, school supplies, and building materials. ABC University/College is committed to phasing out the use of PVC in building materials when renovating or building new buildings.

ABC University/College therefore pledges to:

- Phase out the use and purchase of PVC in building materials, school and office supplies. This includes both product and packaging applications.
- We will prioritize alternatives to PVC flooring, roofing, carpeting, and office supplies (i.e. 3-ring binders, computers.) It is our goal to phase out PVC usage in these four areas within three years or less given the availability of safer, cost-effective alternatives.
- Conduct a campus-wide inventory of PVC to identify where PVC is being purchased and prioritize opportunities to reduce and phase out its use.
- Form a university/college wide “Restricted Materials and Safer Products” team, whom will be charged with developing and overseeing a plan to implement this policy. This will include members of the administration, procurement staff, concerned faculty and student body.
- Encourage suppliers and vendors to reduce or eliminate their use of PVC in products and packaging. We will select those vendors who are willing to meet PVC-free goals. The university will develop a preferred list of suppliers and vendors based on those who are willing to provide PVC-free

product alternatives.

- In the proposal process, purchasing agents shall request information relating to PVC content in products. Purchasing staff should incorporate a PVC disclosure requirement into the standard purchase agreement. The disclosure should require the supplier to specify the amount of PVC contained in products to be purchased and provide alternatives if available.
- We will develop and publicly release annual benchmarks to track our progress in implementing this policy.
- On an annual basis, we will review our university’s financial investments in the PVC chemical industry and develop and implement actions plans to financially divest from PVC chemical manufacturers.
- Educate school administrators, faculty, procurement staff, students, and alumni about our new PVC policy. We will publicly report on our progress in implementing the policy on a yearly basis to students, faculty, and alumni on the web and within university publications (i.e. campus newspaper, annual report, etc.).

In evaluating alternatives, XXX University/College will show preference for products and packaging that do not contain, use, or lead to the formation of highly hazardous chemicals throughout their lifecycle. Wherever possible we will avoid products and packaging made with highly toxic chemicals that build up in our bodies and the environment and can cause cancer, harm the nervous system, endocrine system, cause birth defects and/or reproductive health problems. Wherever possible, we will avoid other hazardous plastics of concern such as polystyrene, polycarbonate, and acrylonitrile butadiene styrene that contribute to these highly hazardous chemicals. XXX University/College will show preference for PVC-free materials that do not contain highly hazardous chemicals and will set a long term goal of sourcing bio-based polymers that are sustainably sourced, have higher recycled content, and can be reused, recycled, or composted.