

Sample Student or Faculty Resolution on Phasing Out PVC

(i.e. Student or Faculty Assembly/Senate)

A Toolkit & Guide to Action for Student Activists

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Whereas: ABC association is committed to creating a greener and more sustainable campus at ABC University.

Whereas: ABC University has green and sustainable procurement policies in place such as X, Y and Z.

Whereas: Polyvinyl chloride (PVC or vinyl) plastic is widespread in school and office supplies and building materials purchased by ABC University. This may include office supplies such as 3-ring binders and computers, and building materials such as flooring, roofing, carpeting and wall coverings.

Whereas: PVC is the most toxic plastic for our health and environment. No other plastic contains or releases as many dangerous chemicals. These include dioxins, phthalates, vinyl chloride, ethylene dichloride, lead, cadmium, mercury and organotins.

Whereas: PVC's lifecycle is uniquely responsible for the release of Dioxins, some of the most toxic chemicals ever studied by the EPA. Dioxins are a class of chemicals unintentionally created from the manufacture and disposal of PVC products, such as vinyl flooring. Dioxin is a potent cancer-causing agent and is considered to be a human carcinogen by the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' National Toxicology Program.

Whereas: Phthalates are chemicals used to soften or plasticize PVC products such as flooring, which can be released from PVC into the air inside ABC University. The phthalates cling to dust and then is breathed in by students and teachers. Over 90% of all phthalates are used in PVC products including many found at ABC University.

Whereas: Some phthalates such as DEHP have been linked to reproductive problems including shorter pregnancy duration and premature breast development in girls and sperm damage and impaired reproductive development in boys. Phthalates are highest in children ages 6 to 11, and in women.

Whereas: Asthma is a serious, sometimes life-threatening respiratory disease that affects 7 million American children and 16 million adults. In recent years, a number of studies have found a correlation between phthalates emitted from PVC building products such as flooring and asthma.

Whereas: Today's sealed and insulated buildings often result in indoor air that is actually more polluted than the air outside. EPA studies of human exposure to air pollutants indicate that indoor levels of pollutants may be two to five times— and occasionally more than 100 times— higher than outdoor levels. Indoor air pollution can be reduced through good planning and building maintenance.

Whereas: PVC flooring and other PVC products can contribute to poorer indoor air quality as PVC products can off gas chemicals called volatile organic compounds (VOCs). A study by the California Air Resources Board found forty chemicals, some of which are toxic, off-gassing from PVC flooring.

Whereas: PVC flooring often requires the use of toxic cleaners to keep it durable and shiny. This wax and strip maintenance has long been a source of health concern due to the toxic VOCs such as formaldehyde (a known carcinogen) used in the maintenance products.

Whereas: Safer and cost-effective alternatives to PVC are readily available

Whereas: Recognizing the hazards of PVC, many leading fortune 500 corporations have taken steps to reduce and phase out their purchase of PVC plastic. This includes companies such as Wal-Mart, Target, Apple, Nike, and Sears Holdings.

Whereas: Over 100 healthcare institutions have taken steps to reduce the purchase and use of phthalates and PVC in the healthcare sectors.

Now, therefore be it resolved: The ABC association calls on ABC University to develop and implement a new

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policy to reduce and phase out the use and purchase of PVC plastic by ABC University. We recommend the policy should at a minimum include the following elements:

- ABC University should reduce and phase out PVC in office supplies, school supplies, and building materials.
- ABC University should investigate and implement cost-effective strategies to reduce and phase out the use of polyvinyl chloride (PVC) in building materials, school and office supplies.
- ABC University should prioritize alternatives to PVC flooring, roofing, carpeting, and office supplies (i.e. 3-ring binders, computers.) ABC University should phase out PVC usage in these four areas within three years or less given the availability of safer, cost-effective alternatives.
- ABC University should conduct a campus-wide inventory of PVC to identify where PVC is being purchased and prioritize opportunities to reduce and phase out its use.
- ABC University should 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 should include members of the administration, procurement staff, faculty and student body.
- ABC University should encourage suppliers and vendors to reduce or eliminate their use of PVC in

products and packaging. ABC University should select vendors who are willing to meet PVC-free goals. ABC University should 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 should request information relating to PVC content in equipment. Purchasing 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.
- ABC University should develop and publicly release annual benchmarks to track its progress in implementing this policy.
- ABC University should review its university’s financial investments in the PVC chemical industry and develop an action plan to financially divest from PVC chemical manufacturers.
- ABC University should educate school administrators, faculty, procurement staff, students, and alumni about its new PVC policy. ABC University should publicly report on its 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.).

