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WWF findings of the flame retardant Deca-BDE in blood already addressed by EU risk assessment and present no risk

New data produced by WWF UK in a report on blood test carried out in 33 people¹ demonstrate that all recorded levels are well within margins of safety. We however regret the alarmist tone which aims at creating anxiety when, in the case of Deca-BDE for instance, the highest level reported is 0.00000034 gram of Deca-BDE per gram of blood.

Deca-BDE's European scientific assessment was closed in May 2004 and identified no risk from the use of Deca-BDE either for the environment or human health. Similar WWF blood monitoring studies, which had reported similar levels of Deca-BDE, were taken into account by European scientific experts who concluded that these findings do not demonstrate a risk to human health.

Chemicals are an integral part of modern life. The ability to find the substance is in many cases due to the increasing sophistication of analytical testing methods. In the case of Deca-BDE, industry is addressing the issue of traces found in the environment by initiating a voluntary programme aiming at controlling industrial emissions. This programme has already started in the UK.

Flame retardants make a valuable contribution to the maintenance of fire safety standards in the home and public places. For example, the use of flame retardants to enable furniture and mattresses to meet the 1988 UK fire safety regulations is estimated to have saved the lives of more than 3,000 people².

note: WWF's previous reports reviews by leading independent scientists, as it relates to Deca-BDE can be found at: <http://www.bsef-site.com/newsmanager/newstemplate.php?id=95>

¹ WWF UK, contamination the next generation October 2004

² http://www.dti.gov.uk/homesafetynetwork/bs_rffr.htm