USEPA Announces New Rules and a Ban on Use of TCE and PCE



12/10/2024

On December 9, 2024, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), pursuant to the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), announced that it will ban all uses of trichloroethylene (TCE) and all consumer and most commercial uses of perchloroethylene (PCE). In addition, there will be required worker protections for the remaining uses. PCE and TCE are both nonflammable chlorinated solvents that are volatile organic compounds. PCE can biodegrade into TCE, and PCE may contain trace amounts of TCE as an impurity or a contaminant. The chemicals can often serve as alternatives for each other. Both chemicals are known to be cancer causing, even at small concentrations.

TCE is used as a solvent in consumer and commercial products such as cleaning and furniture care products, degreasers, brake cleaners, sealants, lubricants, adhesives, paints and coatings, arts and crafts spray coatings, and is also used in the manufacture of some refrigerants. Safer alternatives are readily available for the majority of these uses. According to the release, USEPA is finalizing its prohibition on all uses, most of which will occur within one year. The remaining uses, such as cleaning of aircraft parts and medical devices, will be phased out over a longer period of time.

PCE is a solvent that is widely used for consumer uses such as brake cleaners and adhesives, in commercial applications such as dry cleaning, and in many industrial settings. Safer alternatives are readily available for the majority of these uses. There will be a 10-year phaseout for the use of PCE in dry cleaning, with different regulations for newer and older machines. According to USEPA, the rule finalizes stringent, achievable controls for continuing uses as theses uses are related to national security, aviation, and other critical infrastructure.

Despite the known impacts, these chemicals have still been widely used. These risk management rules were finalized pursuant to the 2016 TSCA amendments.

If you have any questions about this article, please contact:

Frances B. Stella, *Member and Chair*, Environmental and Land Use Practice, at fstella@bracheichler.com or 973.403.3149

Lindsay P. Cambron, *Counsel*, Environmental and Land Use Practice, at lcambron@bracheichler.com or 973.364.5232

Authors

The following attorneys contributed to this insight.



Frances B. Stella

Member
Environmental and Land Use, Cannabis Industry, Litigation, Real Estate

973.403.3149 · 973.618.5549 Fax

fstella@bracheichler.com



Lindsay P. Cambron

Counsel
Environmental and Land Use, Litigation, Real Estate

973.364.5232 · 973.618.5592 Fax

lcambron@bracheichler.com