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## **GREENPEACE CAMPAIGN COULD UNDERMINE FIRE SAFETY**

### ***Attacks on life-saving flame retardants ignore fire dangers; promote use of less-tested substances***

Washington, D.C. – Greenpeace, the international environmental activist group, has launched a major campaign aimed at forcing computer manufacturers to abandon using the most effective flame retardants available. This international campaign could result in lowering fire safety for the public, as well as promoting the use of unidentified “alternative” substances about which very little may be known.

“This Greenpeace campaign has the very real potential to lower fire safety around the world,” said Dr. Raymond B. Dawson, chairman of the Bromine Science and Environmental Forum (BSEF). “Greenpeace is using its infamous ‘name and shame’ approach to force companies to stop using the best, most proven flame retardants available, regardless of the human or environmental consequences. If they succeed, the likely result will either be more fires and more unnecessary injuries or deaths, or greater use of less-tested substances.”

Greenpeace is primarily attacking the use of two brominated flame retardants: Deca-BDE which is used in the plastic housings of electrical equipment to prevent fires; and, TBBPA, which is primarily used to protect printed circuit boards from overheating and bursting into flame. Both flame retardants have been extensively studied in the US and Europe.

The European Union, for example, undertook an extensive, 10-year-long risk assessment which examined more than 580 studies of Deca-BDE and concluded that it did not pose human or environmental risks in need of additional regulation.

A similar analysis of TBBPA is in progress, and the human health portion of that study was recently completed with a conclusion that TBBPA does not pose any risk to human health.

Dr. Dawson also noted that Deca-BDE is blended into the plastic used in electrical equipment housings, and so is not readily available to humans or the environment, and TBBPA reacts chemically with the polymer that printed circuit boards are made of and is actually bound into the finished product.

“The fact is, for their specific uses, these are the two best, most proven products on the market,” said Dr. Dawson. “Greenpeace is ignoring the science that supports these products, and demanding that manufacturers abandon the known for the unknown. To ask manufacturers to abandon well-tested products for less proven alternatives is ill-advised and goes against the fundamental principles of sound chemical regulatory policy.”

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*BSEF is the international organization of the bromine chemical industry, whose purpose is to inform stakeholders and commission science on brominated chemicals such as flame retardants*