



# PRODUCT RECALLS

## EU extends ban of products containing DMF

 MARCH 9, 2011

The European Commission has decided to prolong the prohibition and sale of products containing the biocide Dimethylfumarate (DMF). The ban is now extended to 15 March 2012.

The Commission's Decision of 1 March 2011 requires that:

Products containing DMF are prohibited from being placed or made available on the market, and

Products containing DMF and already placed or made available on the market are withdrawn from the market and recalled from consumers, and that consumers are adequately informed of the risks posed by such products.

The ban covers all products containing DMF. However, reports of incidents from Member States available to date have indicated that the issue has been confined generally to leather furniture and footwear. There have been no reported cases in Ireland.

The National Consumer Agency advises consumers before buying such products to check with the retailer if the item contains DMF.

The NCA also reminds manufacturers, distributors and other operators that under the [General Product Safety Regulations](#) there is an onus on them to only place safe products on the market.

As a result, if they become aware that a product already placed on the market is hazardous, appropriate action must be taken to protect the safety of consumers.

The NCA has responsibility for implementing the Commission's decision in Ireland.

The NCA is empowered to issue a direction to any operator found not to be complying with the Commission's decision.

Any person who fails to comply with such a direction may be guilty of an offence and liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding €3,000 and/or imprisonment for three months.

## What to look out for:

DMF can be found in little pouches or sachets (similar to a tea bag) fixed inside leather furniture or in footwear boxes.

It is a biocide, which is used to prevent moulds that may damage leather furniture, footwear or clothing during storage in a humid climate or during transport.

Over time the substance evaporates and penetrates the product. DMF can penetrate through clothes onto the skin and may cause dermatitis, skin itching, irritation, burns, and in some cases, acute respiratory difficulty.

The NCA has contacted major retailers, wholesalers and distributors advising them of the European Commission's decision and requested them to take appropriate measures to ensure that consumers are not put at risk through contact with products that contain DMF.

Industry representative bodies have also been made aware of the decision and its implications for their members.