

MEDIA STATEMENT

NO LEAD AND CHROME PIGMENTS USED BY SOUTH AFRICAN PVC INDUSTRY

South African vinyls industry is proudly heavy metals-free

Johannesburg, 11 June 2018. In the wake of recent communication sent to the South African paint industry by the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) regarding plans to ban the import of all leads, the Southern African Vinyls Association (SAVA) is proud to confirm that all lead and chrome pigments have been eliminated from locally-manufactured PVC products.

One of the key areas of SAVA'S Product Stewardship Commitment (PSC), has been the phasing out of potentially dangerous or hazardous heavy metals from the PVC production process. Other objectives of SAVA'S Product Stewardship Commitment include:

1. A commitment to the responsible and sustainable vinyl recycle programme that quantifies the opportunity for recycling in post-production and post-consumer waste and sets realistic and sustainable goals.
2. Ensuring open and effective communication with industry role players, the public and government in order to correct perceptions about the science, reality and local applicability of PVC.
3. Ensuring industry health through product, market and application opportunities, thereby improving human capital and overall growth, prosperity and sustainability of the vinyl industry.
4. Ensuring a fully functional industry initiative that adds value to both members and the industry by growing a sustainable membership base with an effective marketing plan.

SAVA believes that raw material suppliers, product manufacturers, product distributors and consumers are joint stewards for the responsible and sustainable production, use and disposal of PVC products. By signing our PSC, our members voluntarily commit themselves to ensuring that all heavy metal additives are removed from their workplace environments, as well as to reaching the highest possible product quality standards and environmentally friendly production processes and materials. They are bound to an open disclosure commitment and are required to supply general data related to a specific commitment to an independent auditor.

The Southern African Plastic Pipe Manufacturers Association (SAPPMA), was one of our first members and industry bodies to become heavy metal free when they embarked on this journey in 2006. Although lead does not leach from PVC pipes and does not pose any danger to people once installed, SAPPMA felt compelled to create a safer environment for the manufacturers. To this end, SAPPMA members began transitioning to Lead Free stabilisers at their own expense and without passing it on to the end-user, despite the fact that they were considerably more expensive than lead stabilisers at the time.

By replacing lead with calcium/zinc and calcium based stabilisers that are non-toxic to humans during the manufacturing process of PVC pipes, they were able to reach their goal five years ahead of the anticipated European Union (EU) targets in 2013. This set the tone for the rest of the South African PVC industry to follow, and today we are proud to say that this step that has placed SAVA members right up front with other global leaders in the rest of the developed world.

For more information, visit www.savinyls.co.za