

# You Can Rest Assured When our Name is on it



## Vintex Upgrades Barriers to be Certified Lead, Heavy Metal and Phthalate Free

*In response to growing concerns in healthcare and institutional settings over certain harmful chemical compounds, Vintex introduces "Safe Guard Barrier Systems"...the healthier, safer barrier choice. All Vintex Safe Guard Barrier fabrics are certified by an independent third party lab to be free of lead, cadmium, mercury and phthalates. See last page for details.*

## The Facts Speak

**79%**

of offshore products contain lead in excess of North American Standards

**83%**

of offshore pads contain other heavy metals including cadmium and mercury in excess of North American Standards

**100%**

of offshore pads contain Phthalate plasticizers, in most cases DEHP (DOP) which is subject to a permanent ban under the CPSIA guidelines in certain products

**92%**

of offshore pads either delaminate or leak well before 150 laundry cycles

# Lead Alert

*A "Made in China" label on your bed pad could mean you are needlessly exposing your customers to dangerous lead compounds.*



**A bed pad is much more than a "bed linen"** ... it contains a polymer fluid barrier which is designed to protect the sheets below. When that barrier is a Vintex Safe Guard barrier your customers' linens are safe and so are you, your customers, their staff and their residents or patients. If your pad or barrier is "Made in China" you could be introducing lead compounds in your customer's facility.

**Fact 1.** Lead is a potent neurotoxin that accumulates in bone and soft tissue over time. Lead has been shown to permanently reduce cognitive capacity of children at extremely low levels of exposure...i.e. it causes irreversible brain and nervous system damage. Lead paints were removed from shelves 25 years ago. The EPA banned sale of leaded gasoline in 1996. Lead pigments and stabilizers were phased out in North American barrier fabrics twenty years ago.

**Fact 2.** As a direct result of fallout from highly publicized stories of lead paint in Chinese toys and lead in Chinese plastic bibs leading to 2007 recalls at retailers (Walmart and Toys R Us), the US Consumer Products Safety Commission passed a law (USCPIA of 2008) mandating that lead levels in a range of products be reduced to specific levels in 2009 and lower levels through 2011 and that these levels be

certified by outside laboratories. This has led to panicked retailers returning millions of dollars worth of toys and even baby crib mattresses to suppliers who could not provide certification of these levels of lead and other chemicals.

**Fact 3.** Even now, many barriers on pads labeled "Made in China" have been shown to contain lead. Lead compounds are still widely used in China as the most effective and least costly way to stabilize formulations to resist heat degradation during processing and formation of the plastic film or coating. Most pad suppliers simply don't know and cannot control where their pad's barrier is manufactured. Even if they can identify the company or plant where it is manufactured, they still can't be certain that the plastic compound is, or will continue to be lead-free. The plastic manufacturer simply does not have his process or his raw material supply-chain under control to the extent to know that his components are lead-free, much less certify that they are. The fact is that the Chinese supplier who is selling these "Made in China" pads to the North American company often purchases the barrier from different manufacturers to fulfill new orders...the manufacturer who offers the lowest price at that particular time will supply barrier...or sometimes their barrier "supplier" is not a manufacturer at all, but a broker who may represent multiple plastic manufacturers. Such is the supply-chain in a market where business is won with low prices and profits are made by finding the lowest cost components from an untraceable, unregulated and unreliable base of manufacturers.

## Chemical Compounds Lets Compare the levels

	"Made in China"	Vintex Safe Guard Barrier Systems
LEAD	× Found in 79% of pads	✓ Lead Free
HEAVY METALS	× Found in 83% of pads	✓ Heavy Metal Free
PHTHALATES	× Found in 100% of pads	✓ Phthalate Free

# Heavy Metals

For various processing and/or manufacturing cost savings, heavy metals such as cadmium, arsenic and mercury can appear in barrier fabrics used in "Made in China" pads.



**Fact 1.** Cadmium is highly toxic and a known carcinogen. Reduction in the use of cadmium has been driven by not only health and safety concerns but environmental concerns which would lead to further exposure. Cadmium in soil and groundwater from disposal and mining has been found to

accumulate in crops and waste incineration risks possible cadmium inhalation which is a more efficient and deadly method for absorption by the body than ingestion.

**Fact 2.** Cadmium compounds were removed from plastic compounding and coloring in North America many years ago. In China, however cadmium stabilizers and pigments (yellow, orange and red) are still prevalent and may be used in barriers in "Made in China" pads. Most of these "Made in China" pad suppliers simply don't know and cannot control where their pad's barrier is manufactured. Even if they can identify the company or plant where it is manufactured, they still can't be certain that the plastic compound is, or will continue to be heavy metal-free. The plastic manufacturers simply do not have control of their process or their raw material supply-chain to the extent to know that their components are heavy metal-free.

**Fact 3.** Arsenic has been used as a common antibacterial agent due to its aggressive ability to control microbial growth. The fact that this compound still continues to show up in the barrier portion of bed pads that are designed to be close to the skin is worrisome. Vintex and most North American manufacturers use low toxicity anti-microbial systems which do not contain arsenical compounds.

**Fact 4.** As a consequence of the antiquated technology common in PVC production in China, mercury may be present in some PVC resins made from these processes. Modern North American manufacturing processes assure that no mercury is present in resins polymerized from these facilities.

## The Phthalate Question

**Fact 1.** "Phthalates" refer broadly to a group of chemicals (phthalate ester plasticizers) added to plastics to impart softness and flexibility. These phthalate plasticizers are widely used in formulation of the barriers found in bed pads.

**Fact 2.** Although based on questionable science, phthalates in general and one in particular (commonly known as DOP) have been implicated as a "potential hazard" based on one high dosage study showing hormonal disruption in rodents. The US Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of August 2008 included restrictions of phthalate content along with lead, cadmium and heavy metal restrictions on "toy or child care products" ...with children including ages infant through age 11. These restrictions took effect in February 2009 with the resultant scramble by suppliers of a wide range of plastic products being

required to assert phthalate-free status and certification of such in order to comply with their customers' government dictated requirements.

**Fact 3.** 100% of all barriers identified with the "Made in China" label contain phthalates, most of them contain DOP, the most notable Level 1 phthalate cited by US-CPSIA. Similar to their inability to control lead content (See lead section) Chinese pad suppliers are not in a position to dictate or control plasticizer content from a plastic manufacturer. They may not even be able to identify who their barrier manufacturer is from one container shipment to the next.

**Fact 4.** More and more healthcare institutions are concerned with the content and traceability of the products they introduce into their system. When it comes to the health and safety of their employees

and the people entrusted to their care, they are choosing to err on the side of caution and, where possible, remove products suspected to pose a potential hazard to people and the environment. The phthalate, and in some cases, all phthalates are increasingly showing up on these institutions' lists of restricted substances. Here is an excerpt from The Environmental Purchasing Policy of one very prominent healthcare provider:

*"Our procurement and supply staff is committed to the principles of Environmentally Preferred Purchasing which is defined as...the purchase of products and services whose environmental impacts have been considered and found to be less damaging to the environment and human health when compared to competing products and services"*

**SAFE GUARD**  
BARRIER SYSTEMS

Vintex Safe Guard Barrier Systems are certified by independent third party laboratories to be lead free, heavy metal free and phthalate free. Vintex Safe Guard Barrier Systems are manufactured in our state-of-the-art facility in Ontario, Canada utilizing North American supply chains providing the confidence and security of 100% raw material traceability.

System certification is available to our partner customers who recognize value, reliability and the peace-of-mind the Vintex brand provides.

# Vintex Safe Guard Barrier Systems. The safer, more environmentally friendly choice

## Choose a cleaner, safer planet... Vintex vs "Made in China" barrier

The Chinese production method of PVC resin is predominantly the old acetylene based technology which can use a toxic mercury catalyst. In addition to this, the process has been demonstrated to be far less environmentally friendly and more energy intensive than the current, state of the art North American method (ethylene based).

Local environmental impact at Vintex and Vintex's North American suppliers and customers is far less severe than those in China where no EPA or OSHA regulations insure that pollution and workplace health and safety standards are met. (Vintex complies with all CCOSH and Health Canada regulations, the equivalents of OSHA and EPA in Canada).

Choosing to use pads with the Vintex barrier means none of the lead, cadmium, mercury or other heavy metals in the "Made in China" pad end up in the landfill at the end of the product's useful life.

## Smaller environmental footprint...Vintex barrier in reusable pads vs disposables

Launderable reusable pads with the Vintex barrier last up to 200 wash/dry cycles. A reusable pad typically does the work of four disposable pads so compare the environmental impact of one pad to

that of 800 disposable pads (4 pads x 200 linen sets)...a 100 bed facility saves 132 cubic yards of landfill space in one year by choosing reusables over disposables.

In addition to the landfill volume, consider all the raw materials needed to manufacture disposables ...add to that the tons of packaging materials and the added energy used along the way in transportation of new product brought into facilities and disposal of waste product taken out. When you consider the full life-cycle impact on the environment, the most durable reusable option, the Vintex Safe Guard pad is the clear choice.

## More sustainable...Vintex barrier vs other reusable barrier materials

Vintex's durability is unparalleled among polymers... a Vintex PVC barrier far outlasts a polyurethane barrier... so when disposed of, the Vintex barrier pad contributes only a fraction of the waste volume from polyurethane pads to landfill or incinerate.

Vintex PVC is more energy efficient than other plastics. Because it's resin production uses 56% non-petroleum based feedstocks, it depletes fewer scarce resources than other polymers. Also, production is based on natural gas...the cleanest of the fossil fuels.

When PVC is judged on the basis of a scientific study of performance and life cycle based analysis it earns higher sustainability marks than other polymers including "natural" fiber or "bio-based" materials. When products last longer, there are fewer product replacements necessary. The net effect is improved sustainability.



## Our Certification

*All products sold under this system are certified by a third party independent lab to be free of Lead, Cadmium, Mercury and Phthalates.*

- ✓ **LEAD FREE**  
Lead content of less than 10 parts per million per ASTM D-1976-07, using EPA 3052 digestion.
- ✓ **HEAVY METAL FREE**  
Cadmium and mercury content of less than 10 parts per million. Arsenic at less than 20 parts per million per ASTM D-1976-07, using EPA 3052 digestion.
- ✓ **PHTHALATE FREE**  
Manufactured without the use of phthalate plasticizers (DOP/DEHP, DBP, BBP, DINP, DIDP, DnOP) Less than 1000 parts per million per CPSIA guidelines, using GC-MS method.

# Vintex Launderable Barriers

**Since 1986** bed pads and other launderable incontinence barrier products made with Vintex have been the standard of quality sought by hospitals and nursing homes globally. In 2009 Vintex introduced the Safe Guard Barrier Systems certification. This is your assurance that products made with Vintex barrier fabrics are free of lead, heavy metals and phthalates. So look for the Vintex name and rest assured that you have purchased the safest most durable product on the market.

