



## Safe PVC: an issue at the heart of EPFMA's existence

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*When PVC was first made commercially available in the 1930s, it was one of the most innovative & exciting products in the world. PVC nowadays is essential in medical applications, construction and food preservation. But it has been the target of allegations from environmental groups that the product is unsafe and environmentally unfriendly.*

*EPFMA wants to respond to these allegations and show that it has always been concerned about public health and the environmental impact of its products, even before fears about PVC were voiced.*

*EPFMA has always taken a pro-active stance and health, safety and the environment. We believe strongly in our products and we are continuously working to make EPFMA cling film safer and more efficient.*

*We can confidently state that EPFMA PVC cling film is the safest and most efficient way to keep food fresh and free from bacteria. And we believe that the public should have access to all the facts which support this.*

### **PVC cling film in daily use**

PVC cling film is used by consumers all over the world on a daily basis, so it is crucial that its safety is clearly demonstrable.

Cling film is used to wrap all kinds of food (meat, cheese, fruit, etc.) in order to extend the food's shelf life and by preserving it in a safe manner between production and final consumption. It ensures the food keeps its original quality and is able to be kept fresh with no need to freeze.

## **Statement 1: EPFMA: an association of responsible and pro-active producers**

EPFMA's policy is based on 2 important concepts: forward thinking and voluntary standards. Since its creation, EPFMA has pro-actively and voluntarily taken steps that allow its members to produce their cling film in the most responsible and safest way possible and to the highest standards in the industry.

### **Quality Charter**

EPFMA has developed its own Quality Charter, which sets out its commitment to responsible production, including no use of heavy metal stabilisers, no phthalates and the lowest migration levels in the world.

The Charter states clearly that, in addition to respecting the strict EU legislation on PVC and food contact, EPFMA voluntarily exceeds these standards and imposes stricter standards still on its members.

EPFMA members are obliged to live up to the Charter. Any potential new member of the EPFMA will be asked to adhere to the Quality Charter as a prerequisite to joining the association.

### **Voluntary Commitment PVC industry**

EPFMA subscribes, via EuPC, to the [VinylPlus](#) Voluntary Commitment of the PVC industry. The Voluntary Commitment sets out the basic principles to which the PVC industry adheres: continuous improvement of products, responsible care in the production chain and sustainable development.

EPFMA strongly supports the statements and principles laid out in the Commitment and encourages other cling film producers to follow suit and apply the strictest and safest rules of production in the best interest of all consumers.

### **Transparency**

Transparency towards clients, consumers and the public authorities is also one of the key policies of EPFMA members; we believe that people are entitled to have access to accurate information.

- 1) EPFMA has therefore developed a trademark, which guarantees to converters and consumers that EPFMA-labelled products comply with the high quality standards laid down in the Quality Charter.

The EPFMA trademark and label are registered as a Community trademark and the products that carry the label are tested and certified on a regular and independent basis.

- 2) All EPFMA products are labelled with pictograms or wording indicating the intended use of the film. This is essential and allows the consumer to use the film safely for the correct purpose.
- 3) EPFMA maintains an active dialogue with the EU authorities to assist them in developing high and realistic safety standards for its products.
- 4) The Association is also open to dialogue with consumer organisations and environmental groups for in-depth and honest discussions about its products. The EPFMA web site aims properly to inform all interested parties and EPFMA members are willing and able to address all questions and information the public might require.

**Conclusion: EPFMA producers are among the most responsible and transparent producers in the industry and strive for the continuous improvement of their products.**

### **Statement 2: EPFMA PVC cling film is not harmful to human health.**

- PVC in general is one of the best-researched products in the world. Numerous institutes and laboratories have studied all possible aspects of PVC and of PVC cling film in particular.
- Decision-makers at national and European level base their policy concerning PVC and food contact on this independent scientific research. European decision-makers have put in place the strictest legislation in the world for PVC that comes into contact with food. Despite this, a ban on PVC use has never been considered.
- It is no coincidence that around 2/3 of the food people buy is protected from contamination and harmful bacteria by plastic film. In countries where such packaging is not available, up to 50% of all produced food is wasted between production and consumption.
- EPFMA strongly supports the EU's aim to set strict realistic standards for food contact and actively works with EU decision-makers to develop this legislation. In fact, EPFMA goes further by voluntarily exceeding the standards and limits set out by the EU, because it wants to keep on providing safe cling film to consumers.

*Why is EPFMA cling film not only safe with regard to health, but also the safest PVC film on the market?*

1. **Hygiene.** EPFMA labelled cling film is produced under the strictest hygiene conditions.

2. ***Migration.*** EPFMA cling film has the lowest levels of migration (the interaction between food and packaging) in the world. All films' migration levels fall well within the strict EU standards and thus pose no threat to public health.
3. ***No phthalates.*** Although phthalates, when used as plasticisers in PVC, are not dangerous, EPFMA has voluntarily decided not to use phthalates in its products anymore. EPFMA members believe that phthalates are not necessary to their products and that better performance can be achieved with other plasticisers.
4. ***No heavy metal stabilisers.*** Stabilisers are necessary in PVC production to achieve the desired properties. EPFMA members have never and will never use lead and cadmium as stabilisers in their films. Only EU-approved stabilisers are used.

Whenever technological progress is made, EPFMA will use it to further improve the safety and performance of its products.

**Conclusion: banning EPFMA PVC cling film is unnecessary and could even be detrimental to human health. It would expose food to micro-organisms, the source of numerous human illnesses, and would increase the quantities of wasted food dramatically.**

### **Statement 3: EPFMA PVC cling film is not harmful to the environment**

- Scientific research has proven that PVC does not contaminate the soil with dioxins and is thus safe for landfill.
- Furthermore, the incineration of PVC makes up just 0.4% of negative emissions into the atmosphere. Emissions from cars, trucks and power stations are many times more harmful to the environment.
- PVC cling film is getting continuously lighter. Over the past 30 years, a weight reduction of 1/3 has been achieved. This means that the future PVC waste is reduced at the source, in production.

**Conclusion: PVC waste is not harmful to the environment and can be disposed of in a very safe way.**

**PVC cling film is safe for daily use. It does not pose a threat to human health or to the environment.**

**EPFMA cling film is the safest on the market. It is produced in optimum circumstances and in a transparent, responsible way whilst striving for continuous improvement.**