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**PUBLIC CITIZEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH GROUPS ASKS FOR
BAN ON VINYL CHLORIDE AS A PROPELLANT IN AEROSOLS**

The Health Research Group today petitioned the Food and Drug Administration, the Consumer Product Safety Commission, and the Environmental Protection Agency to ban the use of vinyl chloride in aerosolized cosmetics, including hairsprays, in aerosolized household products, and in pesticide products, since there is substantial evidence that vinyl chloride is a carcinogen.

Vinyl chloride is known to be used as a propellant for aerosols. The chronic toxicity and evidence of carcinogenicity of vinyl chloride monomer for humans has been documented by scientific studies and clinical reports. Immediate action is necessary to regulate the use of the chemical since there is no evidence to show that human beings can be safely exposed to the chemical.

Vinyl chloride monomer, which is used in making polyvinyl chloride (PVC), has received much attention in the past few weeks since it has been linked with a rapidly rising number of liver cancer deaths among vinyl chloride workers at a single B.F. Goodrich plant in Louisville, Kentucky. In the past few days the sixth case of the rare and invariably fatal cancer--angiosarcoma of the liver--has been diagnosed in a worker at that plant.

Experimental studies have found production of the same type of liver cancer in rats after inhalation of vinyl chloride at doses as low as 250 ppm [for 127 weeks], according to an Italian study presented at a Department of Labor hearing on the chemical last Friday.

According to a published report, the levels of vinyl chloride--under conditions where hair spray is being used--can exceed 250 ppm (Aerosol Age, April 1964, p. 47). Most industries--including B.F. Goodrich--say that it has been their practice in recent years to try to keep industrial exposures down to 50 ppm over an 8 hour day. [The Federal occupational health standard is currently 500 ppm.]

The Health Research Group also requested that the Food and Drug Administration immediately prohibit the use of polyvinyl chloride (PVC) containers to package any cosmetic product which is capable of leaching detectable amounts of vinyl chloride from its plastic container. In 1973 FDA and industry tests of alcoholic beverages packaged in PVC bottles determined that between 10-20 ppm of vinyl chloride had migrated out of the plastic bottles into the distilled spirits or wine they contained. To the Group's knowledge, no tests have been conducted to determine whether other alcohol-containing or organic solvent-containing liquids (e.g. bath lotion or perfume) can also leach detectable amounts of vinyl chloride from their PVC containers. Moreover, although the FDA proposed banning the use of PVC whiskey bottles in May 1973 because of the potential toxicity of vinyl chloride, the agency has failed to finalize the action.

In letters to the heads of all three agencies, the Group requested that the agency make public the brand names of all aerosol consumer products and cosmetics presently marketed--or marketed at any time in the past--which contain vinyl chloride as a propellant so that exposed people can inform their physicians. The public has the right to be fully informed about the dangers it faces or has faced--regardless of the public relations damage that certain companies may suffer.