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North America

Canada | United States of America

Canada

The Canadian Environmental Protection Act 1999 (CEPA 1999) remains Canada's most important chemical control law, requiring assessments of new substances placed on the market after 1994. It mandates reviews of substances introduced before 1994, ensuring their safety for human health and the environment. Substances not on the Domestic Substances List (DSL) cannot be manufactured or imported without prior government approval, reinforcing Canada's commitment to regulating hazardous chemicals effectively.

Bill S-5, known as the Strengthening Environmental Protection for a Healthier Canada Act, was adopted in 2023, marking a major amendment to CEPA for the first time in over two decades. It enhances protection for vulnerable communities, advances Indigenous reconciliation, strengthens chemical management strategies, and reduces reliance on animal testing. The government has until June 2025 to develop a comprehensive new plan for managing chemicals and integrating the right to a healthy environment into CEPA.

Canada has also begun transitioning to the seventh revised edition of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS7), replacing the fifth edition previously in use. This transition will occur over three years to allow industry stakeholders time to comply with updated classification and labeling standards.

Key News from 2024

Modernizing Canada's Environmental Protection: The Journey of Bill S-5

The modernization of the Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA) is underway, embedding the right to a healthy environment into law. The government has launched a public consultation schedule to strengthen CEPA, focusing on chemicals management, environmental monitoring, and reducing vertebrate animal testing. The initiative aligns with global best practices and aims to improve environmental health standards. Read more [here](#).

Health Canada and Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) Announce New Regulatory Developments under Updated CEPA

Following the passage of Bill S-5, Health Canada and ECCC have initiated new regulations focusing on high-risk substances and toxic chemical restrictions. A series of public consultations will take place in 2024–2025 to shape new frameworks for environmental protection, including a watch list approach for hazardous chemicals and strategies to minimize animal testing. Read more [here](#).

Key News from 2024

Canada Amends Domestic Substances List to Enhance Environmental Protection and Public Health

The Canadian government has amended the Domestic Substances List to regulate three chemicals—AGE, o-CGE, and TGIC—introducing new Significant New Activity (SNAC) requirements. The move ensures that any significant new uses of these substances undergo thorough risk assessment before approval, aligning with the country's Chemicals Management Plan. Read more [here](#).

Government of Canada Publishes Notice on Amendments to the Domestic Substances List Under CEPA

The government plans to unmask the identities of 198 substances currently listed under Part 3 of the Domestic Substances List to improve transparency. Public consultations are open for stakeholders to provide feedback on confidentiality and regulatory impacts, with changes expected to align with Bill S-5's amendments. Read more [here](#).

Canada Updates Mercury Regulations: Expanded Prohibitions and Improved Compliance

New mercury regulations enhance Canada's compliance with the Minamata Convention, phasing out mercury-containing products and tightening controls on mercury use. The regulations reduce permissible mercury limits, eliminate outdated exemptions, and strengthen enforcement mechanisms to mitigate mercury pollution risks. Read more [here](#).

Key Dates for 2025

Health Canada amended the Hazardous Products Regulation (HPR) to align with GHS 7 and introduce a new "Chemicals Under Pressure" hazard class from GHS 8. A three-year transition period has been set, requiring full compliance by **December 15, 2025**.

United States of America

The Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) regulates chemical manufacturing, importation, and use in the U.S. Since its 2016 amendment under the Lautenberg Chemical Safety Act (New TSCA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has expanded chemical testing, risk-based assessments, and regulatory actions to protect human health and the environment.

In 2024, EPA updated the Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) data, tracking over 20,000 facilities and highlighting zinc, lead, and PFAS releases. The TSCA Inventory now includes 86,741 substances, with 900 chemicals moved from confidential to public status. New regulations for PBT chemicals DecaBDE and PIP (3:1) introduced stricter safety measures, water release bans, and phase-out plans. EPA also proposed new Significant New Use Rules (SNURs), requiring notification before new chemical applications.

To enhance workplace safety, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) aligned the Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) with GHS 7, updating labeling, hazard classification, and safety data sheets. EPA expanded the Safer Chemical Ingredients List (SCIL) with 27 new chemicals, promoting safer alternatives. Additionally, PFAS regulations were tightened, classifying them as hazardous constituents and removing previous reporting exemptions.

These updates reflect New TSCA's focus on stricter chemical oversight, risk-based regulation, and stronger transparency requirements, ensuring greater environmental and public health protections in the U.S.

Key News from 2024

EPA Releases Updated 2023 Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) Data

The EPA has released updated data for the 2023 Toxics Release Inventory (TRI), which details toxic chemical waste management, releases, and pollution prevention activities across more than 20,000 industrial and federal facilities. The new data provides insights into chemical releases and waste management practices, helping communities and regulatory agencies track environmental impact. Read more [here](#).

EPA Updates TSCA Inventory with New Chemical Listings

The Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) Inventory has been updated, now listing 86,741 chemical substances, with 42,293 classified as active in commerce. This update improves transparency in chemical manufacturing and includes regulatory data on commercial activity and significant new use requirements. Approximately 900 previously confidential chemicals have now been made public as part of ongoing efforts to enhance chemical safety. Read more [here](#).

Key News from 2024

EPA Proposes Significant New Use Rules (SNURs) for Chemicals

The EPA has proposed new Significant New Use Rules (SNURs) under the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) for certain chemicals previously deemed “not likely to present an unreasonable risk”. Under these rules, companies must notify the EPA at least 90 days before manufacturing or processing these chemicals for new applications. This allows the EPA to review potential health and environmental risks before the chemicals enter widespread use. Read more [here](#).

Compliance Deadlines for the Updated Hazard Communication Standard

The updated Hazard Communication Standard establishes deadlines for compliance, requiring manufacturers to update labels and safety data sheets for substances by 2026 and for mixtures by 2027. Employers have additional time to update workplace training and compliance measures, with final deadlines extending to 2028. Special provisions have been introduced for labeling small containers, particularly those under 100 milliliters, to ensure that workers can still access critical hazard information. Read more [here](#).

OSHA Updates Hazard Communication Standard to Align with GHS 7

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has updated its Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) to align with the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS 7). The revised standard introduces changes to hazard classification, safety data sheets, and labeling requirements to improve worker safety. Chemical manufacturers and importers must now include harmonized signal words, pictograms, and hazard statements on their labels, along with updated classification criteria for mixtures. Read more [here](#).

Key Dates for 2025-2026

On May 20, 2024, the U.S. Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) published an updated Hazard Communication Standard (HCS). OSHA is adopting the new requirements by **January 19, 2026**, for substances and by **July 19, 2027** for mixtures.