

CARB ATCM 93120 and EPA Title VI Certification Service

CARB Regulation

On April 26, 2007, California Air Resource Board (CARB) approved airborne toxic control measure (ATCM) to reduce formaldehyde emission from composite wood products including of hardwood plywood, particleboard, medium density fiberboard, thin medium density fiberboard. This is newly added in the California Code of Regulation — new sections 93120 -93120.12. ATCM requires the composite wood products to be certified by the accredited TPC (Third Party Certifier) to ensure its compliance of CARB formaldehyde emission requirement, if the composite products are placed on market of California of the USA.

EPA Regulation

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), published the final rules on formaldehyde emission standards for composite wood products (40 CFR Part 770) in the Federal Register (FR) on December 12, 2016, which came into force on May 22, 2017. The final rule is formulated by EPA and is used to implement Title VI of the toxic substances control act (TSCA) of the United States of America. The formaldehyde emission involved in TSCA Title VI is the same as the emission limit established by CARB. The promulgation of EPA regulations is based on CARB regulations. EPA TSCA Title VI requires that composite wood products must be tested and certified to ensure that only compliant products can enter the product supply chain. Composite panel must be certified by a third-party certification body (TPC) approved by EPA to meet the requirements of formaldehyde emission.

Comparison of Key Requirements of CARB and U.S. EPA TSCA Title VI Regulations

| Element/ Requirement | CARB ATCM | EPA TSCA Title VI |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| Effective date | Introduced in two phases between 2009 and 2013, with initial emission standards (Phase 1) followed by more stringent emission standards (Phase 2); as of January 2014, only Phase 2 compliant products are legal for sale in California. | TSCA Title VI regulation became effective on May 22, 2017; compliance date (manufacture-by date) for emission standards is June 1, 2018. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● As of March 22, 2019, all composite wood products (i.e., panels) must be TSCA Title VI compliant; all finished goods (e.g., flooring, cabinets, furniture) that contain composite wood products must be produced using composite wood material produced by a panel producer that is TSCA Title VI compliant. ● Composite wood panels produced domestically or imported into the U.S. prior to June 1, 2018, may be sold or used to make finished goods until supplies are depleted. |
| Authority for regulation | California Health & Safety Code (title 17, sections 93120 – 93120.12). | Federal Toxic Substances Control Act, 15 U.S.C., Sec. 2697 (TSCA Title VI). |
| Affected businesses | Manufacturers (i.e., panel producers); fabricators of finished goods; and distributors, importers, and retailers of panels and finished goods. | Same as CARB. |

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| Element/ Requirement | CARB ATCM | EPA TSCA Title VI |
|---|---|--|
| Emission standards | Formaldehyde emission standards for three types of composite wood products (i.e., panels): hardwood plywood (HWPW), particleboard (PB), and medium density fiberboard (including thin MDF). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires use of composite wood products that comply with emission standards in all finished goods. | Same as CARB. |
| Recordkeeping | Two years. | More stringent than CARB - three years. |
| Manufacturers (i.e., panel producers) | Compliance with Phase 2 formaldehyde emission standards must be verified by a CARB-approved third-party certifier. Manufacturers must comply with quality assurance testing requirements. | Similar requirements. Compliance with TSCA Title VI formaldehyde emission standards must be verified by an EPA-recognized third-party certifier. |
| Exemption from third-party certification based on use of no-added formaldehyde (NAF) or ultra-low-emitting formaldehyde (ULEF) resins | Panel producers must work with TPC to conduct testing and apply to CARB for approval to be granted exemption from TPC-oversight for two years. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panel producers must apply for re-approval every two years. NAF - More stringent than EPA - NAF application for exemption from TPC oversight requires three months of quality control (QC) data and one TPC test (primary or secondary test method); 90 percent of QC data and the TPC test must be no higher than 0.04 ppm; all data must be no higher than 0.05 ppm for HWPW and no higher than 0.06 for PB, MDF, and thin MDF. ULEF - same requirements as NAF, but requires six months of QC data and two TPC tests. | Status quo for panel producers already approved by CARB. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panel producers seeking new exemption must apply to CARB or their EPA TSCA Title VI TPC for approval to be granted exemption from TPC-oversight for two years. Must apply for re-approval every two years. NAF/ULEF panels must be labeled as specified in TSCA Title VI, including panel producer's TSCA Title VI TPC number. EPA requests that CARB-approved Executive Orders for NAF/ULEF exemptions and approvals for reduced testing be provided to EPA by the TSCA Title VI TPC through the EPA CDX system. Applications to EPA for NAF/ULEF exemption or reduced testing must be submitted to the EPA CDX system by an EPA-recognized TSCA Title VI TPC. NAF - Application for exemption from TPC oversight requires three months of QC data and one TPC test; 90 percent of QC data (does not include TPC test) must be no higher than 0.04 ppm; all data must be no higher than 0.05 ppm for HWPW and no higher than 0.06 ppm for PB, MDF, and thin MDF. ULEF - same requirements as NAF, but requires six months of QC data and two TPC tests. |

Note: For composite wood products and finished goods sold in California, if there is a difference between the CARB and U.S. EPA requirements, the more stringent requirement applies, regardless of whether it is a CARB or U.S. EPA requirement. This table will be updated if there are future changes to the regulatory requirements.

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- Accredited as the qualified TPC by CARB known as CARB TPC-46 and EPA known as EPA TPC-100, by Executive Order w-19-046.
- Authorized by IKEA to provide testing service according to IOS-MAT-0003 and IOS-MAT-0181 of IKEA.
- Our test reports are well-recognised by overseas buyers, thus providing you with greater global market access
- Help you to reduce your liability risk by demonstrating your safety standards

Our services

Provides one-stop service for CARB and EPA formaldehyde testing and certification includes but not limited to:

- CARB and EPA certification for the composite wood product manufacturers.
- Formaldehyde testing service for the composite product manufacturers and furniture manufacturers according to IKEA's requirement.
- Establishing the appropriate small scale testing methods (i.e., ASTM-D6007, EN ISO 12460-5, EN ISO 12460-3, JIS A1460, ASTM D5582 etc.) and CARB and EPA Quality Control Limit for the composite wood products manufacturers.
- Training for relative QA personnel of client, assist the manufacturers to improve the testing competence of internal lab for quality control.
- Factory auditing and inspection according to the CARB and EPA regulation or the buyer's requirement.
- Seminars of the CARB and EPA regulations and formaldehyde testing standards update.

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