

EU bans allergy-causing chemical DMF used to protect leather furniture and footwear from mould

Contributed by
Thursday, 28 May 2009

BRUSSELS (AFP) — EU nations voted on Thursday to ban dimethylfumarate (DMF), an allergy-provoking chemical used to protect leather furniture or footwear from mould, the European Commission said.

EU manufacturers are already banned from using the dangerous chemical but until now foreign companies have been allowed to use it in products exported to Europe.

The decision, which also calls for products already on the market containing DMF to be recalled, was taken as a matter of urgency after at least five EU countries reported consumers suffering allergies due to the chemical.

Consumers in Britain, Finland, France, Poland and Sweden have suffered serious health problems ranging from itching, irritation, redness, burns and, in some cases, acute respiratory difficulty due to DMF.

The chemical is placed in sachets which are then put inside furniture and shoe boxes to kill mould that would otherwise hurt the products during transport and storage in humid climates.

"There can be no compromise on safety," EU Consumer Affairs Commissioner Meglena Kuneva said in a statement.

"An EU-wide ban on the use of DMF in all consumer goods is designed to eliminate the serious health risks and in particular the severe allergic reactions suffered by some consumers when they are exposed," she added.

[Click here to read the source story](#)