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Special Attention Required for BFRs in Food Contact Articles

Brominated flame retardants (BFRs) are synthetic additives mainly used in electrical and electronic appliances and in construction materials. The purpose is to stop small ignition events from turning into larger fire scenarios, leaving more time for people to escape and more time for emergency personnel to respond.

However, the properties of some BFRs are typical for persistent organic pollutants, and certain BFRs, which are suspected to cause adverse health effects.

In the United States, any food contact material (FCM) must be approved by the FDA. If unauthorized substances are present, FDA does consider the material to be adulterated per the Food, Drug & Cosmetic Act Section 402(a)(2)(C)(i) and refuses admission into the United States per 801(a)(3).



For more information, please contact our [Customer Service team](#).

FDA recently strengthened the enforcement on non-authorized substances including brominated flame retardants. The presence of BFRs in food contact materials is considered unacceptable regardless of if those substances are added intentionally or introduced as contaminants.

FDA will refuse the import of any product which contains brominated flame retardants (even at trace amount ppm levels) in any of its food contact components and the agency maintains an import alert on the [website](#). Until now the detentions related to BFRs are visible for (but may not be limited to) small domestic kitchen appliances. Due to the potential cross-contamination, electrically operated kitchen appliances are at a higher risk to contain flame retardants in their food contact components.

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SUBSTANCE	ABBREVIATION	CAS NO.
2,4,6-tribromophenol	TBP	118-79-6
3,3',5,5'-tetrabromobisphenol A	TBBPA	79-94-7
1,2,5,6,9,10-hexabromocyclododecane	HBCD	3194-55-6
Decabromodiphenylether	BDE-209	1163-19-5
Decabromodiphenylethane	DBDPE	84852-53-8

Test specifications as prescribed per FDA Title 21 regulations do not by default cover the screening for any non-authorized substances. However, given the current enforcement activity, Plastic components of any product are the main material at risk. SGS recommends testing specified BFRs in FCMs.

SGS's global network of laboratories can ensure your products meet the appropriate territorial regulations for food contact materials and help pave the way for compliance.