

# Whitford's Retail Marketing Team helps clear up the confusion about PFOA, PTFE and nonstick cookware

It's easy to become confused about the safety of traditional nonstick coatings and nonstick cookware because of inaccurate newspaper articles, TV reports, and advertising claims. Allow us to clear the air and reconfirm the inherent safety of traditional nonstick coatings and nonstick cookware.

## **PTFE and PFOA are NOT the same**

PTFE (polytetrafluoroethylene) is a type of fluoropolymer commonly used to create a nonstick surface on cookware, bakeware, small electric appliances, and other food-related applications. PTFE is also an essential component in items such as automobiles, airplanes, mechanical and electrical equipment, oilfield equipment, medical equipment, surgical implants, pollution control equipment, fire-resistant wire insulation, and various household items. The FDA (Food and Drug Administration), NSF (National Sanitation Foundation), the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) and other regulatory agencies all make clear that PTFE is completely safe for people and the environment.

PFOA (perfluorooctanoic acid) is a fluorochemical that has been used as a processing aid in the manufacture of PTFE. In recent years, the US EPA became concerned about emissions of PFOA into the environment; consequently, the EPA intends to regulate the use of PFOA by December 31, 2015.

In the meantime, the EPA has stated: *"The information that EPA has available does not indicate that the routine use of consumer products poses a concern. At present, there are no steps that EPA*

*recommends that consumers take to reduce exposures to PFOA."*

## **PFOA Stewardship Program**

As a result of the EPA's concerns about PFOA, six major fluoropolymer manufacturers joined with the EPA in a voluntary program to "work toward the elimination of PFOA from emissions and products by the end of 2015." The program is referred to as the "2010/2015 PFOA Stewardship Program" and the manufacturers appear to be on track to meet the goals of eliminating PFOA in PTFE manufacturing by December 31, 2015.

The Stewardship Program does not impact the use of PTFE in any applications. Moreover, the EPA does not intend to ban or restrict the use of PTFE. PTFE coatings are here to stay.

## **What is Whitford doing?**

As a coatings manufacturer, Whitford purchases PTFE from companies that are signatories to the 2010/2015 Stewardship Program. We have been working with each of our PTFE suppliers to confirm they are making progress to eliminate the use of PFOA in the manufacture of fluoropolymers we purchase by December 31, 2015. Whitford currently offers a wide range of coatings containing fluoropolymers made without PFOA.

## **What options are available to you?**

If you want to use Whitford coatings made without PFOA in the manufacture of your product, please contact your Whitford sales or technical representative for more information.

The logo for Whitford, featuring the word "Whitford" in a stylized, blue, outlined font.

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