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PKSC Presented Voluminous Data to the CIR Showing That Its Members' Products Are Safe

The Professional Keratin Smoothing Council (PKSC), an association of the leading manufacturers, distributors and salon professionals in the keratin smoothing category, has presented voluminous data to the Cosmetic Ingredient Review Panel (CIR) showing that its members' products are safe when used per manufacturer's directions. PKSC members require licensed cosmetologists to participate in a comprehensive educational/certification program in order to have access to their professional-use-only products, and to ensure that safe use and handling information is clearly communicated.

Edward Quevedo, a partner at Paladin Law Group LLP and counsel for the PKSC, states that, "The companies in this industry, as in the auto or food industry, or any other, span the range of corporate responsibility from those who play fast and loose with the law to those who go well beyond the legal minimums. The members of the PKSC are squarely in the latter camp. The members of our Council have spent tens of thousands of dollars conducting product development, safety research and testing to ensure that their products consistently, when used properly, are safe with exposures well below regulatory exposure limits."

PKSC members are engaged in on-going efforts to further improve their products and recommendations for safe use and handling. Great concerns have been expressed by the public and salon professionals with regard to the safety of products in our category. Data from multiple independent laboratories and scientists have shown that PKSC, members' products are safe according to current regulatory standards of safety. Our members provide formulations that can be used safely by following our recommended application techniques which significantly reduce the potential for sensory irritation. Our member companies continue to work together to raise the standard of education and information provided by manufacturers in the keratin smoothing category. Council standards include ensuring full disclosure of ingredients and Material Safety Data Sheet compliance.

The prestigious CIR's most recent determination provides an opportunity and challenge for our members to continue to improve product safety, as well as to enhance education programs. It is important to understand that the CIR has ruled that keratin smoothing products **CAN** be used safely. However, they are not yet convinced that they **ARE** being used safely in salons. The CIR has expressed its concerns and the PKSC is listening very carefully. The CIR has requested additional information to demonstrate that these products can be used consistently in a safe manner in professional salon establishments.



Quevedo said “This is an invitation we intend to enthusiastically accept. The CIR’s job is to be conservative when dealing with product safety. I have no doubt that we will succeed in convincing them that this is our singular mission, as well.”

While the keratin smoothing products manufactured by members of the PKSC contain ingredients that release limited traces of formaldehyde gas, none contain formaldehyde as an ingredient. Formaldehyde is a dry gas, and therefore cannot be an ingredient in any product. It is very important for the public to understand that while traces of formaldehyde are released during application of these products, exposure levels are consistently well below the safety levels established by regulatory agencies. Even so, when products are improperly used or the proper safety precautions are not heeded, both cosmetologists and clients may experience symptoms related to sensory irritation, such as watery eyes or nose or throat irritation. The Council’s efforts include continued focus on reducing salon exposure to levels that will avoid sensory irritation.

The PKSC recommends that consumers take an active role in ensuring that they receive the very best and safest hair smoothing services. They should insist that services be performed using products and application techniques that minimize the potential for sensory irritation. Start by asking your salon professionals which brand of hair smoothing product will be used for your service. PKSC member brands include Cadiveu, Keratin Complex, Marcia Teixeira, and SalonTech. Ask for these brands by name to ensure that you are using a brand that is committed to safety and educational excellence. Consumers should **always** ask to see their stylist’s training certificate, issued by the brand's manufacturer to ensure that they have successfully completed an education/certification program enabling them to provide a safe and effective service. Finally, check to ensure that appropriate air ventilation is being used in the salon to control vapors and minimize the potential for sensory irritation. Salons that are not equipped with the appropriate ventilation needed to prevent sensory irritation should **NOT** provide these services until this situation is corrected. Proper ventilation that is appropriate for the services being performed in the salon is **VERY** important for both consumers and salon professionals. Aerovex Systems (www.AerovexSystems.com), one of our founding members, is the developer of a hair salon source capture ventilation system, which provides a premiere example of "appropriate" salon ventilation equipment. Such equipment is useful for many types of salon services, including keratin smoothing and can offer an extra level of ventilation to help ensure the safety and comfort of clients and cosmetologists.

As a consumer of keratin smoothing treatments, it is important to remember that if you experience symptoms related to sensory irritation such as eye, nose or throat irritation, it is recommended that you ask your cosmetologist to discontinue the service. Clients should seek out salons that are equipped to provide keratin smoothing services in an appropriately ventilated environment that will eliminate the potential for sensory irritation to occur.

For further information or to share your experience with keratin smoothing services, go to PKSC.org and register as a consumer. We would love to hear from you.

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