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Gov. Schwarzenegger Signs Groundbreaking Legislation Implementing First-in-the-Nation Green Chemistry Program

California reached another environmental milestone today with Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's signing of [AB 1879](#) by Assemblymember Mike Feuer (D-Los Angeles) and [SB 509](#) by Senator Joe Simitian (D-Palo Alto), moving our state on the path toward a comprehensive green chemistry program to reduce or eliminate hazardous chemicals in our products and the environment.

"This bi-partisan package of environmental legislation propels California to the forefront of the nation and the world with the most comprehensive Green Chemistry program ever established," Governor Schwarzenegger said. "It also puts an end to the less effective 'chemical-by-chemical' bans of the past. With these two bills, we will stop looking at toxics as an inevitable bi-product of industrial production. Instead they will be something that can be removed from every product in the design stage—protecting people's health and our environment. I am excited to lead this effort, which will spur a new era of research and innovation and promises to drive economic growth and competition in the green chemistry sector."

A bi-partisan effort, AB 1879, is jointly authored by Assemblymembers Feuer and Jared Huffman (D-San Rafael) and co-authored by Assemblymembers Sam Blakeslee (R-San Luis Obispo), Ed Hernandez (D-West Covina), Jose Solorio (D-Anaheim) and Senators Simitian and Ron Calderon (D-Montebello). SB 509 by Simitian was co-authored by Assemblymember Feuer and Senator Ron Calderon.

AB 1879 establishes authority for the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) to develop regulations that create a process for identifying and prioritizing chemicals of concern and to create methods for analyzing alternatives to existing hazardous chemicals. It also allows DTSC to take certain actions following an assessment that range from "no action" to "restrictions or bans." The bill also establishes a Green Ribbon Science Panel made up of experts to provide advice on scientific matters, chemical policy recommendations and implementation strategies, as well as ensuring implementation efforts are based on a strong scientific foundation. Moreover, it expands the role of the Environmental Policy Council, made up of the heads of all California Environmental Protection Agency boards and departments, to oversee critical activities related to the implementation of the green chemistry program.

SB 509 creates an online Toxics Information Clearinghouse, a web-based database, to increase consumer knowledge about the toxicity and hazards of thousands of chemicals used in California every day.

At the Governor's request, the Secretary for Environmental Protection has established a Green Chemistry Initiative to develop policy options for implementing a green chemistry program. Instead of making chemical policy through the Legislature on a case-by-case basis, the goal of this initiative is to work with scientists from California and around the world to evaluate the health effects of chemicals and possible alternatives with a systematic and comprehensive approach that is science-based. AB 1879 and SB 509 build on this initiative and contain provisions to implement two of six key recommendations from the upcoming Green Chemistry Initiative – Phase Two Report to be released later this fall.

The two bills signed by the Governor today follow a number of steps California has taken to protect consumers from dangerous chemicals, including:

- [SB 484](#) (D-Migden) which the Governor signed in 2005 giving California the nation's first law requiring disclosure of chemicals in cosmetics, and
- [SB 1379](#) (D-Perata) which the Governor [signed](#) in 2006 starting America's first bio-monitoring program and making California the only state that measures and catalogues human exposure to chemicals.

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