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## CHINA PROPOSE TO REVISE **HEAVY METAL** REGULATIONS FOR **PRINTING INK**

While the demand by traditional print media is shrinking, more and more printing inks are consumed for packaging. There is a misconception that ink is non-toxic. However, once ingested, ink can be hazardous to one's health. Certain inks, such as those used in digital printers, and even those found in a common pen can be harmful. Though ink does not easily cause death, repeated skin contact, or ingestion can cause effects such as severe headaches, skin irritation, or nervous system damage.

In China, the definition of printing ink as listed in **GB/T 15962-2018 Terms of Printing Ink** is a dispersive system consisting of colorants, binders, auxiliaries, etc., which can be transferred during printing when placing colours on the substrates.

Previously, the standards in China for printing inks mainly focused on the specifications of its physical properties (such as tinting strength, fineness, viscosity, adhesion fastness, etc.), lacking the laws and standards on health and safety.



On September 23, 2020, China submitted notification G/TBT/N/CHN/1466 to the WTO about the mandatory national standard 'Limits of certain heavy metal in printing ink (draft for approval)'. This standard is the general safety technical requirements for certain heavy metals in the process of ink production and use, aiming to protect human health and reduce environmental pollution and damage. The standard stipulates the maximum limit requirements, sample preparation and determination methods for lead, cadmium, mercury, hexavalent chromium and eight soluble heavy metals (antimony, arsenic, barium, cadmium, chromium, lead, mercury, selenium). The standard will come into effect 12 months after approval.

The maximum limits of heavy metals in printing ink specified in the standard are as follows:

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES	REQUIREMENTS / (MG • KG <sup>-1</sup> )
Pb	Total content ≤ 100
Cd	
Hg	
Cr (VI)	
Soluble Sb	≤ 60
Soluble As	≤ 25
Soluble Ba	≤ 1000
Soluble Cd	≤ 75
Soluble Cr	≤ 60
Soluble Pb	≤ 90
Soluble Hg	≤ 60
Soluble Se	≤ 500

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### FOR ENQUIRIES

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