



A Summary

Managing Fire and Chemical Exposure Risks of Residential Upholstered Furniture Virtual Summit held Wednesday, April 21, 2021

Introduction. Chemical Insights held a virtual Summit on April 21 to introduce our new [Toolkit](#), “Specifying Residential Upholstered Furniture to Safeguard Human Health and Well-Being: A Toolkit for Reducing Fire and Chemical Risk.” The Toolkit summarizes a call to action on the design and manufacturing of residential upholstered furniture to reduce both flammability hazards and human exposure to flame retardants. Following a [multi-year initiative](#) to research and discuss issues of furniture flammability and human exposure to toxic flame retardants, Chemical Insights released a [Guidance Document UL 118E](#), “Managing Fire and Chemical Exposure Risks of Residential Upholstered Furniture” followed by the Toolkit. Chemical Insights is especially appreciative of the advisory committee members, research partners, and numerous stakeholders who engaged and assisted in these efforts. This marked the 4th Summit convened by Chemical Insights and Underwriters Laboratories on this important safety concern. Our journey has been productive with 1.) key scientific contributions by more than 200 third-party stakeholders and 2.) research data and demonstrations spanning studies of human exposure to flame retardants and processes for reducing furniture flammability without the use of flame retardants.

Summit Presentations. During the virtual Summit, participants were presented a summary of our journey as well as summaries of findings on residential fire hazards and the role of upholstered furniture; risks of human exposure to flame retardants, and how materials and construction techniques affect the flammability of furniture. In addition, a review of the Guidance Document UL 118F was presented including actionable guidelines for the selection and specification of residential upholstered furniture that reduces both fire and chemical exposure risks. We hope this exchange of information will enable more collaborative discussions, continued research, innovation, informed policy advancement, and science-based initiatives leading to furniture products offering protection from both fire and chemical risks.

The Toolkit. “Specifying Residential Upholstered Furniture to Safeguard Human Health and Well-Being: A Toolkit for Reducing Fire and Chemical Risk” was introduced. The Toolkit presents a case for why both chemical safety and fire safety must be considered when selecting furniture, offers guidance on how to specify solutions that address this safety convergence, summarizes meaningful research on flame retardant exposure and furniture flammability, and explains how a fire barrier is designed to resist open flame ignition sources. Greater knowledge of fire safety considerations, including fabrication strategies for slowing ignition, flammability standards and potential chemical exposure issues provides the interior designer with the expertise to specify residential upholstered furniture that better address their clients’ health and safety goals.

Materials from this Summit and other initiatives can be found at www.chemicalinsights.org/FFHH



**Virtual Summit: Managing Fire and Chemical Exposure Risks
of Residential Upholstered Furniture Agenda**
(for reference)

Wednesday, April 21, 2021

1:00 pm to 1:10 pm	Welcome Mr. Terry Brady, <i>President & CEO, Underwriters Laboratories Inc.</i>
1:10 pm to 1:30 pm	Our Journey to Now: Collaboration and Research Dr. Marilyn Black, <i>Vice President & Senior Technical Advisor, Underwriters Laboratories Inc.</i> Susan Inglis, <i>Executive Director, Sustainable Furnishings Council</i>
1:30 pm to 1:50 pm	Flame Retardant Exposure Risks Dr. Barry Ryan, <i>Professor, Gangarosa Department of Environmental Health, Rollins School of Public Health of Emory University</i>
1:50 pm to 2:10 pm	Flammability and Importance of Protection Dr. Stephen Kerber, <i>Vice President UL Fire Safety Research Institute, Underwriters Laboratories Inc.</i>
2:10 pm to 2:20 pm	Break
2:20 pm to 3:20 pm	Flammability and FR Exposure Research Dr. Aika Davis, <i>Research Scientist, Underwriters Laboratories Inc.</i> Dr. Mauro Zammarano, <i>Materials Science Engineer, Flammability Reduction Group of National Institute of Standards and Technology</i>
3:20 pm to 3:40 pm	Guidance Document Overview: "Managing Fire and Chemical Exposure Risks of Residential Upholstered Furniture" Dr. Debra Harris, <i>Associate Professor, Robbins College of Health and Human Sciences of Baylor University & CEO, RAD Consultants</i>
3:40 pm to 4:10 pm	Overview of Toolkit Holley Henderson, <i>Project Manager, Underwriters Laboratories Inc.</i>
4:10 pm to 4:30 pm	Q&A