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GreenSmart neogreene

Why make neogreene to replace neoprene?

A great question to be sure, which has required a significant amount of discussion and consideration on our part. Here's the abbreviated story.

Neoprene is a 100% synthetic material that uses a whole host of marginally acceptable chemical ingredients. As a result of the production of the chemicals, or the chloroprene, or the adhesion of fabrics, workers at many levels can be put at risk of exposure to potentially carcinogenic chemicals. Not all suppliers of neoprene use the same chemical composition nor exist in a country with high standards for worker exposures to potential toxins.

Anyone familiar with the "funny" smell of neoprene has surely asked themselves at some point "what might that be". Some people are even sensitive to the final product and develop a dermatitis response to wearing a wetsuit for example. I must confess, even I would get headaches from having a bunch of neoprene in my office for very long.

I'd like to think that if a supplier knows materials and the resulting products are potentially dangerous, it would eliminate the hazard. Yet, neoprene bags continue to be made and sold without much concern for workers or sensitive consumers. Since few people eat their laptop bags or messenger bags, and these bags aren't designed for kids or as dishware, the laws are likely to not require the supply chain or bag makers to reach for a new standard.

With regulation far, far off, I began a mission to discover a progressive supplier, and re-create neoprene, only make it toxin free! No small task considering that neoprene has been quite successful since its introduction in the 1930s. Our new neogreene is the result of this collaboration. Using a completely different beginning point than chloroprene (all described at our website), working to match the physical attributes necessary for bags, squish and stretch, neogreene was born.

There are four large bonuses to neogreene. 1. toxicity of the material itself is gone. 2. the need for environmentally negative solvent based adhesives to glue the fabrics on the material is gone. 3. the material consumes 25% less energy to produce than neoprene and 4. the material uses 25% less petroleum to make than neoprene.

Yes, unfortunately, neogreene is still petroleum based.

We thought long and hard about this situation, too. Is it green to still promote petroleum based products? We came to two conclusions: 1. Unknowing consumers are going to purchase neoprene for as long as it is available in the marketplace, so to be green our responsibility is to displace these purchases through an improved alternate choice and 2. By eliminating ALL the toxins AND reducing energy consumed AND reducing petroleum required, we were meeting our newly created term of "eco-progress", which in turn coined a new phrase for the unattainable ideal of "eco-perfect".

So, in 500 words, you have our thought process to create and bring to market bags made from neogreene. If you have questions, concerns or applause for our decisions, feel free to send them forward. We have the toxicity report for neogreene, which was recently performed by an independent testing lab. In every category, you'll see the two initials n.d. for None Detected. In this way, we hope we are providing as much transparency as possible about neogreene to make your purchase decisions that much more informed.

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