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JULIE'S HEALTH CLUB

Where alternative and mainstream health meet

By Julie Dearthoff

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Originally posted: June 26, 2009

Consumers misled by greenwash

The perils of the green marketplace

A study showing 98 percent of supposedly environmentally friendly products make false or confusing claims was presented to Congress earlier this month by the environmental consulting firm Terra Choice, Suzanne Goldenberg reported in the Guardian.

The group found rampant greenwashing across the board, and green labels don't seem to help. Twenty-two percent of the 4,000 consumer products TerraChoice evaluated featured a meaningless environmental badge, Goldenberg wrote.

A big problem is that shoppers are bombarded with an estimated 300 competing environmental certification programs, and many of them feature irrelevant or deceptive labels, experts told the recent hearing

"Non-toxic," "natural," and "fragrance free" are particularly misleading because the federal government hasn't set any standards for those words, said Urvashi Rangan, of the Consumers Union.

Moreover, companies don't have to disclose the use of all the chemicals in the bottles. Phthalates, which some believe to be dangerous, are also not listed as ingredients.

To check out your green label, try Consumer Reports' Eco-label center.

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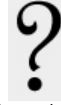
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