



FACT SHEET

Consumer Labeling Initiative

Read the Label FIRST!

to find out how to:

- ✓ use a product properly.
- ✓ protect personal health, family, and pets.
- ✓ store and dispose of a product correctly.
- ✓ help the environment.

We all use common household chemical products every day — What we do with them is our responsibility. It is up to us to choose the right ones for our needs, store them properly, use them safely, and dispose of them with the smallest-possible effect on the environment.

Goals of the CLI:

- ☆ Help consumers choose products well
- ☆ Encourage safe use of products

Objectives of CLI:

- ◆ Learn how to make important safe use, health, and environmental information on household product labels easier to find, read, understand, and use.
- ◆ Conduct research directly with consumers to learn how to provide consumers with clear information they want and need on product labels.
- ◆ Help consumers to make well-informed choices among products—based on their own needs and values—and to use and dispose of products safely.
- ◆ Encourage consumers to “Read the Label First!”

CLI Background:

The Environmental Protection Agency announced the Consumer Labeling Initiative (CLI) in the Federal Register (61 FR 12011) on March 22, 1996.

The goal of the CLI is to foster pollution prevention, empower

consumer choice, and improve consumer understanding of safe use, environmental, and personal health information on household consumer product labels. The CLI is a voluntary, cooperative partnership effort among federal, state, and local government agencies, industry, and other interested groups.

CLI Research Process:

The first phase of the CLI Project, which ended on September 30, 1996, had three components: qualitative consumer research, a literature review of relevant publications, and a review of extensive comments solicited through the Federal Register notice. The qualitative component of the research plan included 135 in-depth one-on-one interviews with users of products in each of three product categories — indoor insecticides, outdoor pesticides, and household hard surface cleaners — in five major cities across the United States.

CLI Projects Underway:

- ✓ Preparation of CLI Phase II Report
- ✓ Launch of "Read the Label First!" consumer education campaign
- ✓ Resolution of policy issues
- ✓ Implementation of labeling changes recommended in Phase II



Selected CLI Accomplishments to Date:

- ✓ Survey completion
- ✓ Publication of CLI Phase I Report
- ✓ Voluntary implementation of labeling changes based on Interim Label Recommendations from Phase I (September 1997)

The results of the Phase I research were presented in the CLI Phase I Report, published September 1996 (#EPA-700-R-96-001).

In Phase II of the CLI, which began in 1997, the Agency's industry and trade association partners undertook a nationwide, statistically valid quantitative survey designed in cooperation with all of the CLI project participants. The survey, conducted in April through June 1998, tested the learnings from Phase I, explored alternatives to existing label language, and established a baseline of current consumer behavior with reactions to labels. The Agency commissioned further qualitative research with consumers to test possible label format and language changes. Also in Phase II, the Agency and its

partners explored other policy issues not easily addressed by consumer research, including how to provide consistent storage and disposal information that will be flexible enough to take local recycling and waste management programs into account.

All the CLI participants will be launching a joint nationwide "Read the Label First!" campaign to encourage consumers to focus on the information on the labels of these products. The goal of this campaign is to help consumers purchase, use, and dispose of products more safely and effectively.

The Phase II activities will be summarized in the CLI Phase II Report, expected to be published during the winter of 1998-1999.

For more information on the CLI, or to order publications, contact:

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