

ITALY - "TOXIC FUR 2": THE SECOND INVESTIGATION CONDUCTED BY LAV (the leading Italian animal rights organization: www.lav.it) ON FUR TRIMS STILL DETECTS THE PRESENCE OF HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES AND POSSIBLE CARCINOGENIC AGENTS. HEXAVALENT CHROME AND FORMALDEHYDE FOUND IN FUR TRIMS OF CHILDRENSWEAR, FOR BABIES AGED LESS THAN 36 MONTHS AND PRODUCED BY THE MOST RENOWNED GRIFFES: D&G, BLUMARINE BABY, WOOLRICH.

LAV CALLS ON THE ITALIAN MINISTRY OF HEALTH TO HAVE THE INVESTIGATED ITEMS WITHDRAWN FROM THE MARKET AND TO BAN FUR FROM CHILDRENSWEAR, AT LEAST.

"Toxic Fur 2", the new investigation conducted by LAV, confirms the presence of toxic and dangerous substances and possible carcinogenic agents in fur trims of clothes for children: all the new samples that were analysed in the investigation are intended for use by children aged less than 36 months.

Strengthened by the new results obtained (described below), LAV addressed an appeal to all fashion companies: **stop using animal fur!** Furs cause sufferings to animals and to the environment and they also represent a possible risk to human health (workers of the production chain or final consumers). **In addition to this, the Italian animal rights organization has called for the immediate intervention of the Ministry of Health.**

The companies involved in "Toxic Fur 2" are:

- **D&G** (coat for children aged 36 months with rabbit fur trim)
- **BLUMARINE BABY** (jacket for children aged 36 months with rabbit fur trim)
- **WOOLRICH** (parka for children aged 24 months with raccoon dog fur trim)

Test reports are alarming: the coat by **D&G** (for girls aged 36 months) is contaminated by the well-known **CHROME VI (hexavalent)**, as well as by a large amount of **CHROME III (trivalent)**, which may cause irritation; the jacket by **BLUMARINE BABY** (for girls aged 36 months) presents high values of **CHROME III (trivalent)**, transferable by means of the sweat, and of **FORMALDEHYDE**; the jacket by **WOOLRICH** (baby aged 24 months) as well, reveals high levels of **CHROME III (trivalent)** and **FORMALDEHYDE** and it is also contaminated by high levels of **NONYLPHENOL ETHOXYLATE**. Other chemicals, such as some Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons, were also detected.

Given these troubling laboratory results, LAV urges the Italian Ministry of Health to:

- make an assessment of the hazards to the health of consumers (in this case children aged less than 36 months), with regard to the use of the tested products;
- temporarily ban the sales of the tested products, as a precautionary measure, and promote specific investigations on other items still available for sale, according to the Consumer Code (Legislative Decree 206/2005);
- ban the use of animal fur, at least in products intended for children.

The investigated garments were bought by LAV in **October and November 2014, at the traditional distribution channels (stores and e-commerce)**. The components made by animal fur, present as edges of the above-mentioned items, were analysed by means of eco-toxicological tests, with the purpose of detecting the possible presence of residual chemicals, used in the **stages of fur tanning and finishing**.

Last year, with the first investigation - called "Toxic Fur" - LAV (www.lav.it) had already denounced the presence of toxic and carcinogenic substances in animal fur trims of garments intended for children. Following that investigation, the Italian Ministry of Health immediately prohibited the sale of the investigated items and initiated new official tests that led to the withdrawal from the market of the

products that were found to be dangerous. Also, following the first complaint issued by LAV, the public prosecutor Raffaele Guariniello has opened a specific investigation.

Just like "Toxic Fur 1" and despite this analysis greatly helped to shed light on the production practices of the fur industry, also "Toxic Fur 2" - the second investigation conducted by LAV - has found toxic and carcinogenic substances that, inevitably, may constitute serious dangers for the health of the consumers that, in this case, are very young children.

As it results from the laboratory tests, the sale of these products in the Italian market, could also be banned because of the violation of the "Consumer Code" (Legislative Decree 206/2005 - art. 103: definition of safe product), due to the residual presence of potentially hazardous substances.

*"Once again, LAV has shown that animal fur causes great sufferings both to animals and to the environment and that it can be very harmful for the Human as well - says **Simone Pavesi, head of LAV Fur-Free Campaign** - The processing of fur implies the use of chemicals classified as "toxic and carcinogenic", and such substances, inevitably, may remain as residues even in the finished product placed on the market, that are worn by adults and children, with varying degrees of health hazard. Consumers can limit exposure to these hazardous substances by avoiding to wear and buy (both for themselves and for their children), products containing even small parts in animal fur."*

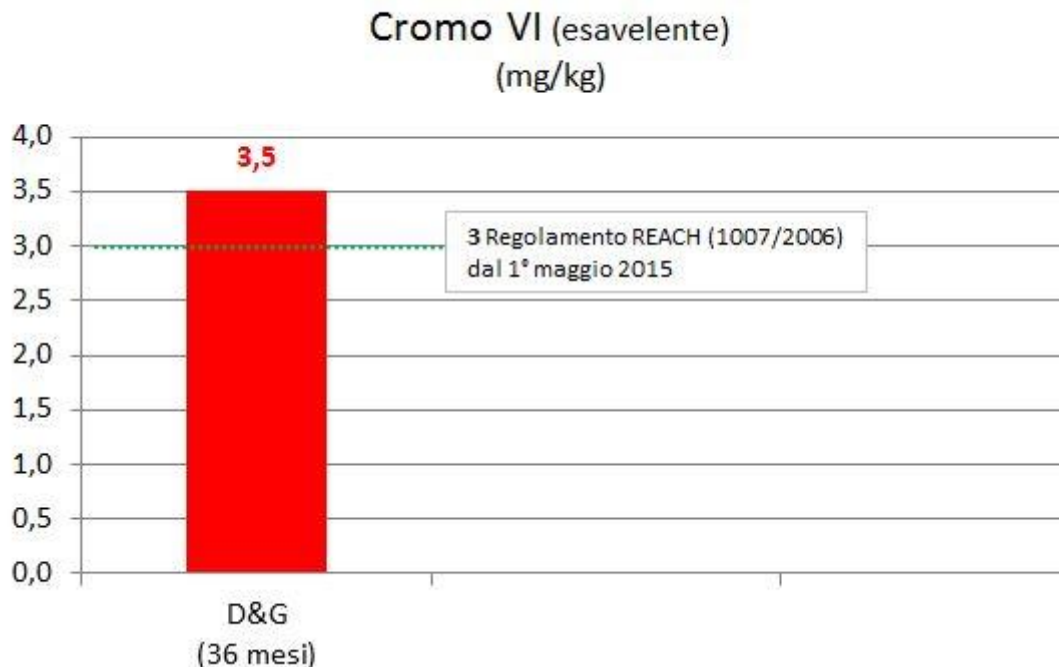
Annex:

- **Photographs of the tested garments**
- **Boards of each single garment analyzed**

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Laboratory tests have revealed the presence of:

- **CHROME VI (HEXAVALENT)** exceeding the maximum safety limits set by the European REACH Regulation, in the garment **D&G**.



The level of Hexavalent Chromium is higher than the limit specified in the EU Regulation 301/2014 of the Commission of 25.3.2014 amending Annex XVII to Regulation (REACH) 1007/2006, regarding the compounds of Chromium VI.

The limit does not apply to the placing on the market of products before 1 May 2015, providing that *"The articles of leather or leather parts that come in contact with the skin cannot be placed on the market if they contain chromium VI in concentrations equal to or greater than 3 mg/kg."*

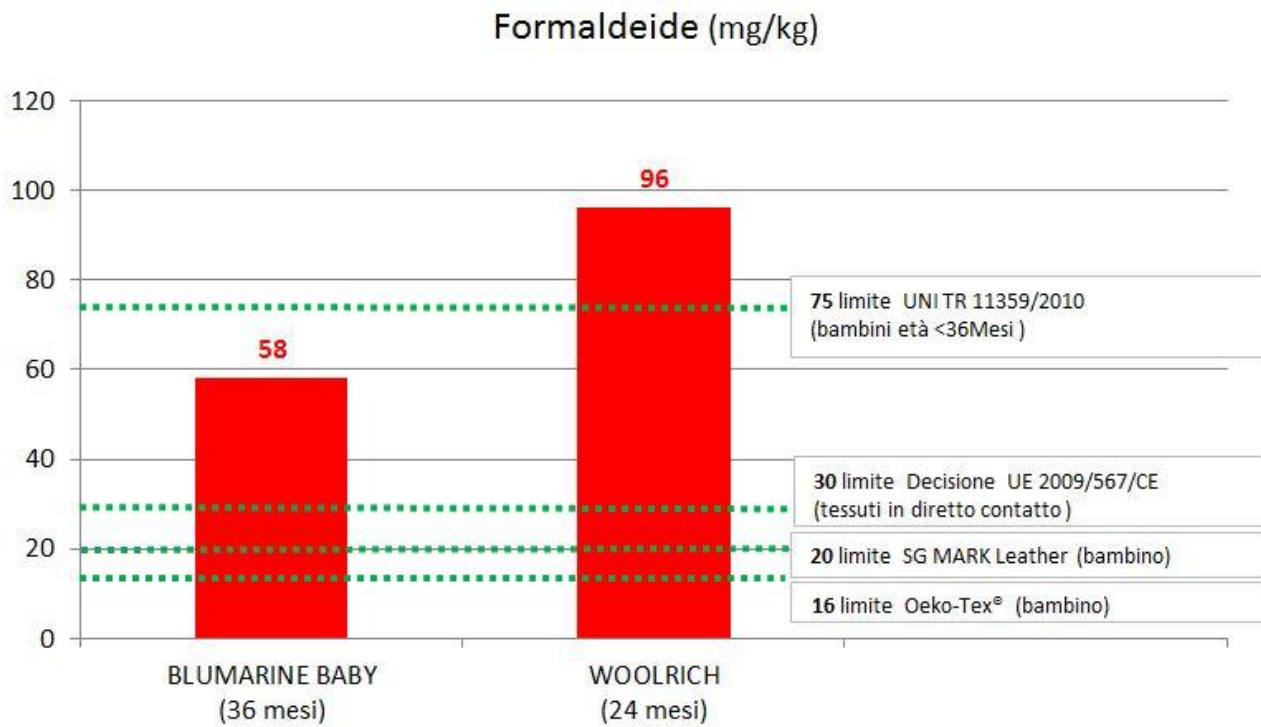
Can the D&G item be considered as a safe product, being put on the market only a few months before the actual ban and exceeding the maximum limit of 3 mg/kg of Chromium VI?

Hexavalent Chromium is classified as a carcinogen substance for almost all living organisms (including humans). It is corrosive for the skin and mucous membranes, it can be fatal if it is absorbed through the skin and if it is swallowed; inhalation may cause spasm of the bronchus. It is suspected to be teratogenic.

The transition from Hexavalent to Trivalent Chromium is favoured by the exposure to UV light and daylight, in conditions of high temperature: situations that may occur in the processing of fur.

Also, it should be noted that the D&G product does not conform to the rules on labelling of textile products. The EU Regulation 1007/2011 (Article 12) has the obligation to label with the words 'Contains non-textile parts of animal origin' all textile products that have components of animal origin.

- **Formaldehyde** exceeding the maximum safety limits established by the main voluntary standards, in the **BLUMARINE BABY** and **WOOLRICH** garments.



The tested samples exhibit values of Formaldehyde exceeding up to 3 times the limit set at the European level for tissues in direct contact with the skin, and more than 6 times the Standard Industrial volunteer Oeko-Tex®.

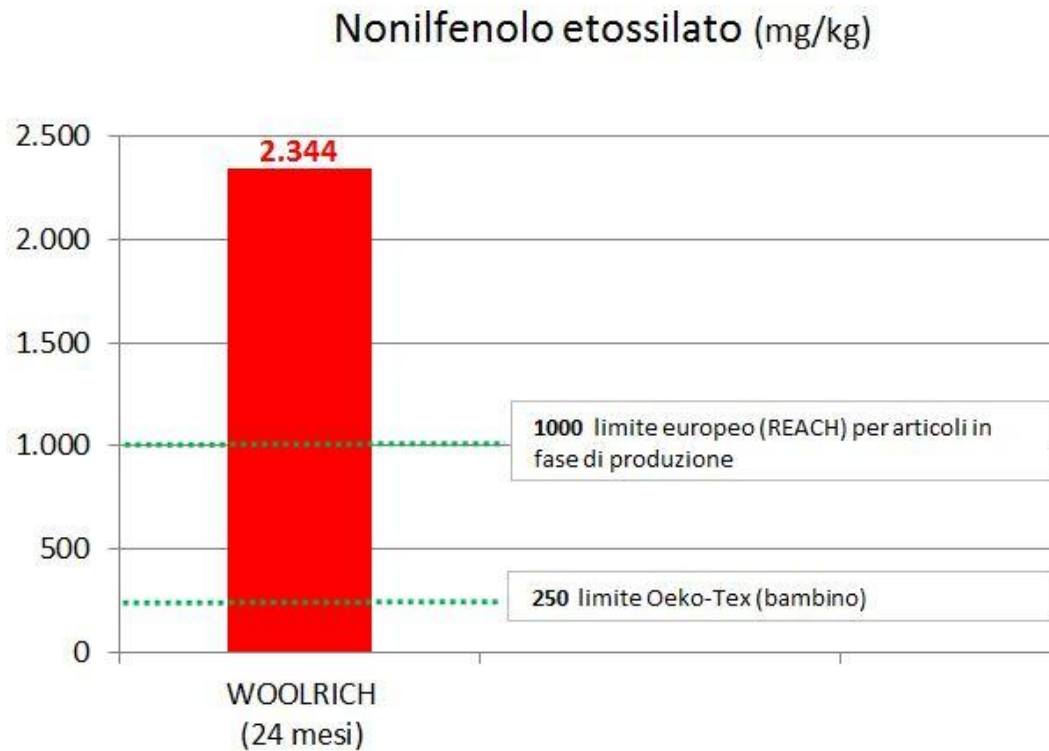
For leather or fur products there are no specific reference standards that determine the maximum residual content of Formaldehyde in a finished product. But we can make a comparison with the EU Commission Decision 2009/567/EC where tissues in direct contact with the skin cannot contain more than 30 mg/kg of Formaldehyde (also required by the Directive "Toys" 2009/48/EC as regards the textile components of toys intended for children under 36 months).

In the absence of a specific legislation on the tolerance of toxic residues in products made by animal fur, in 2009 the RAPEX system (European system of alert for consumer protection) issued a Formaldehyde alert with regard to clothing for children, where the samples examined showed a content of 106mg/kg to 630mg/kg; new alerts were issued in 2010, for a kind of t-shirt containing 52mg/kg and in 2011, for samples of underwear for children with values of 44,9mg/kg.

Formaldehyde is a powerful bactericide used in the production of textile, leather and animal fur products. It's a potentially carcinogenic substance, it can cause irritation of the mucous membranes and of the eyes, if inhaled in certain concentrations.

This substance is considered as a contact allergen; in fact, more than 20 symptoms are known as a result of exposure to Formaldehyde: from mild symptoms, such as eye irritation, diarrhea and bronchitis, to dizziness, behavioural disorders and depression, hair loss, memory loss and cancer.

- **NONYLPHENOL ETHOXYLATED** exceeding the maximum limit set for the European textile products during production, in the **WOOLRICH** garment.



This item would not be marketable, if it was produced in Europe.

European legislation on "registration, evaluation, authorization and restriction of chemicals" (Reg. 2006/1907/EC), better known as REACH, has in 1000 mg/kg (Annex XVII paragraph 46), the maximum tolerable Nonylphenol ethoxylates in textile products during the processing phase.

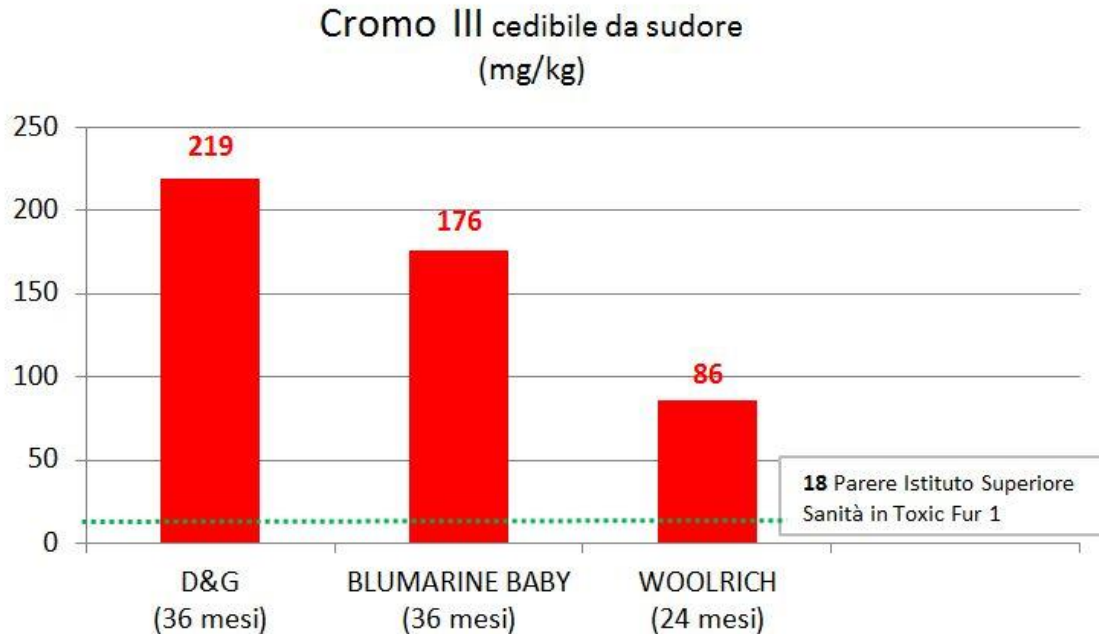
The sample of the brand WOOLRICH contains a quantity of this substances that is much higher than allowed, but having it been produced in China (according to its label) it is now on the market, available for sale.

Alkylphenol ethoxylates (APEO) - including Nonylphenol ethoxylates (NPEOs) and nonylphenol (NP) - are used as surfactants in textile production, in detergents, in industrial detergents and in other categories of industrial chemicals.

While Nonylphenol ethoxylates are not currently recognized as substances that pose a direct threat to the health of those who wear the garments produced with these chemicals, the significant environmental risks associated with this class of substances, are otherwise widely recognized. The Nonylphenol ethoxylates and nonylphenol, in fact, do not degrade when they are released into the environment and can bioaccumulate and contaminate the human food chain. In particular, nonylphenol is considered an endocrine disrupter because of the ability to mimic the effects of estrogen and, in turn, to break the natural balance of hormones in organisms affected.

The Alkylphenol ethoxylates are used in the production of animal fur, for degreasing furs.

- **CHROME III** exceeding the limit imposed by the Italian National Institute of Health (ISS) -in response to the first LAV investigation “Toxic Fur” - (18 mg/kg) in all the samples: **D&G, BLUMARINE BABY, WOOLRICH.**



Trivalent Chromium salts are used for tanning leather; according to the manufacturing process, and especially if they are used with oxidizing or alkaline, it can generate high levels of toxic hexavalent Chromium. Trivalent Chromium is considered relatively nontoxic because it is absorbed by the action of stomach acids, however, some studies in the literature suggest that the trivalent Chromium can be associated with skin sensitization.

In the absence of a specific regulation, the National Institute of Health, in the evaluation of the tests conducted during the previous LAV investigation “Toxic Fur”, indicated in 18 mg/kg the maximum value of Trivalent Chromium transferable from sweat, in reference to products intended for the most vulnerable segments of the population.