



News Alert

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DSM Personal Care and Aroma Ingredients
North America
www.dsm.com

DSM announces Congressional support in requesting OSHA to revisit the treatment of sunscreen as critical personal protective equipment for all outdoor workers.

Royal DSM, a global purpose-led science-based company, today announces that it has secured the support of 11 members of Congress to ask OSHA to review existing standards exempting employer coverage of sunscreen for outdoor workers so that standards better reflect the understanding that sunscreen is critical personal protective equipment and not for “weather-related” protection only.

Skin cancer is now the most common form of cancer, with over 5 million people diagnosed in the U.S. each year. Melanoma is one of the deadliest forms of skin cancer, with about 99,780 invasive melanomas expected to be diagnosed in the U.S. this year, according to the [American Cancer Society](http://www.americancancer.org).

Many of us live indoors, and when we do choose to be in the sun, we can use sunscreen, wear protective clothing and seek shade. But those who are required to work outdoors, regardless of the weather, are at far greater risk of overexposure to ultraviolet radiation.

*‘Whether they are construction workers, agricultural and infrastructure laborers, mail carriers or lifeguards, our **roughly 32 million outdoor workers across the United States** endure an almost daily brutal beating from cancer-causing ultraviolet radiation. **These Americans face a difficult choice every day: risk their health due to overexposure to ultraviolet radiation or risk their jobs by staying home.**’* – Hugh C. Welsh, President & General Counsel, DSM North America

According to the [Centers for Disease Control](http://www.cdc.gov), only 15 to 24 percent of construction workers report regular use of sunscreen. While the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires employers to provide PPE to prevent injury from serious hazards, OSHA doesn’t specifically require sunscreen based on an outdated understanding of sunscreen as “weather-related” protection only, and exempts coverage of sunscreen as PPE because “the cost of requiring employers to pay for . . . weather-related protective gear, sunscreen, etc. would be quite high.”¹ This is particularly concerning given that OSHA suggests the use of sunscreen as protection against the sun, highlighting “an SPF of at least 15 blocks 93 percent of UV rays . . . to guard against skin cancer.”² Clearly, even OSHA acknowledges that sunscreen is not “solely for the protection from weather”.

Considering the risk of sun exposure, the cost of replacing workers and the obvious benefit of sunscreen, shouldn't employers be required to provide sunscreen as PPE to all outdoor workers?

At DSM, we believe so and that's why we are working with 11 members of Congress to ask OSHA to review existing standards exempting employer coverage of sunscreen for outdoor workers so that standards better reflect the understanding that sunscreen is critical personal protective equipment and not for "weather-related" protection only. We believe revisiting the treatment of sunscreen as critical personal protective equipment covered by an employer will increase usage rates of sunscreen significantly³, leading to the reduction of two risk factors for skin cancer – sun exposure and sunburns.

'As one of the world's leading UV filter ingredient manufacturers it saddens us at DSM to see so many lives devastated by such a highly preventable disease. We are very encouraged and grateful for the demonstrated leadership of the 11 members of Congress who have supported this review request to OSHA. If revised, this will have a tremendous positive impact on public health by protecting our most vulnerable populations. Every American depends on outdoor workers – to deliver our mail, grow and harvest our food, build our homes and infrastructure. At the very least, they deserve to be safer under the sun.' – Stephen Wood, Senior Director, DSM Personal Care NA

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DSM - Bright Science. Brighter Living.™

Royal DSM is a global, purpose-led company in Health, Nutrition & Bioscience, applying science to improve the health of people, animals and the planet. DSM's purpose is to create brighter lives for all. DSM's products and solutions address some of the world's biggest challenges while simultaneously creating economic, environmental and societal value for all its stakeholders - customers, employees, shareholders, and society at large. DSM and its associated companies employ approximately 23,000 people around the world and deliver annual net sales of about €10 billion. The company was founded in 1902 and is listed on Euronext Amsterdam. More information can be found at www.dsm.com.

Or find us on:    

For more information:

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