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## MEDIA ADVISORY

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### **“Magic Nano” Product Recall Update** *Expert Available on Health Effects of Inhalation of Nanoscale Materials*

WASHINGTON – Today, the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) issued an update on efforts to understand why “Magic Nano”—a household glass and ceramic tile sealant in an aerosol can —may have caused respiratory problems when used in confined spaces. This is the first health-related recall of an alleged nanotechnology consumer product. BfR’s new press release is available on their website: <http://www.bfr.bund.de/cd/1827>

“Magic Nano” was first sold in supermarkets and discount stores in late March. It was recalled by the manufacturer, Kleinmann GmbH (a subsidiary of Illinois Tool Works) after BfR issued a product warning on March 31. Between March 27 and March 30, 97 people who reportedly used the aerosol spray claimed to suffer from health problems ranging from trouble breathing to six cases requiring hospital treatment in which water accumulated in the lungs (pulmonary edema).

Despite meetings between the BfR and the manufacturer, clear information on what is in the product and how “Magic Nano” was tested for safety is still lacking. According to BfR, it is possible that the reported health effects were associated with very fine airborne droplets produced by the aerosol product.

Dr. Andrew Maynard, science advisor to the Project on Emerging Nanotechnologies, is an internationally recognized expert on airborne particles. According to Maynard, aerosol sprays can produce respirable particles a few micrometers in size, that can remain airborne for long periods of time and can reach the sensitive deep lung if inhaled. Once deposited, there is the possibility of chemicals or nanoparticles (if present) in the droplets causing damage.

Last month, the Project on Emerging Nanotechnologies issued the first publicly available, online inventory of over 200 consumer products that manufacturers claim to be made with nanomaterials or use nanotechnology (see: [www.nanotechproject.org/consumerproducts](http://www.nanotechproject.org/consumerproducts)). Ten products in the Project’s inventory are described as “sprays” but most are pump action sprays. “Magic Nano” is the only known, maker-identified nanotechnology product available to consumers in the form of an aerosol can. “Pump action sprays typically form droplets that are much larger than those from aerosol cans,” said Maynard. “These are less likely to reach the sensitive deep lung when inhaled.”



Irrespective of whether the ‘nano’ here is the root of the health problem, a contributing factor, or a false lead, Maynard sees this incident as a wake-up call. “Other companies using or hoping to use nanotechnology should take note: Without greater transparency on what nanomaterials are being used, how their safety is being evaluated, and appropriate research into nanotechnology’s potential human health and environmental impacts, it is difficult for consumers and policymakers to separate the responsible companies from the less responsible ones, and the safe nanoproducts from the potentially harmful ones.”

Nanotechnology is the ability to measure, see, manipulate and manufacture things usually between 1 and 100 nanometers. A nanometer is one billionth of a meter; a human hair is roughly 100,000 nanometers wide.

To reach Dr. Andrew Maynard for an interview, contact Sharon McCarter, Director of Outreach and Communications, at [sharon.mccarter@wilsoncenter.org](mailto:sharon.mccarter@wilsoncenter.org) or (202) 691-4016.

The Project on Emerging Nanotechnologies was launched in 2005 by the Wilson Center and The Pew Charitable Trusts. It is dedicated to helping business, governments and the public anticipate and manage the possible health and environmental implications of nanotechnology.

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