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We strongly support maintaining exemptions for PFAS substances that serve as U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Significant New Alternatives Policy (SNAP) approved replacements for ozone-depleting substances, including hydrofluoroolefin (HFO) blowing agents used in polyisocyanurate (polyiso) and polyurethane insulation products.

HFO Blowing Agents Provide Significant Environmental Benefits

The transition from legacy blowing agents to HFO technology represents a major environmental success. HFO blowing agents were developed and adopted to replace ozone-depleting substances and higher global warming potential blowing agents previously used in foam insulation manufacturing. Their adoption has enabled insulation manufacturers to dramatically reduce environmental impacts while maintaining critical product performance.

Polyiso and polyurethane insulation products play a vital role in reducing building energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions over the life of a structure. The energy savings generated by high-performance insulation far exceed the environmental impacts associated with manufacturing, making insulation one of the most effective tools available for improving building efficiency and supporting climate goals.

Removing the exemption for HFO-based blowing agents could unintentionally undermine these environmental benefits by limiting the availability of some of the industry's most thermally efficient insulation products.

No Technically Viable Alternatives Exist for Certain Applications

While continued innovation in blowing agent technology should be encouraged, alternative technologies have not yet demonstrated equivalent performance, manufacturability, safety, durability, and commercial viability for all foam plastic insulation applications.

For polyiso and polyurethane insulation used in building envelope systems, blowing agents must provide:

- Long-term thermal performance and R-value retention
- Consistent manufacturing quality
- Compliance with building codes and fire-performance requirements
- Durability over decades of service life
- Commercial scalability and supply reliability

To date, alternative non-fluorinated technologies have not been demonstrated as broadly viable replacements across all foam plastic insulation applications. Premature elimination of HFO-based technologies could disrupt production, reduce insulation performance, and limit access to energy-efficient building materials.

SNAP Approval Reflects Extensive Federal Review

The EPA SNAP program was established specifically to identify safer alternatives to ozone-depleting substances through a rigorous scientific review process that evaluates environmental and human health considerations.

Products utilizing SNAP-approved HFO blowing agents represent technologies that have already undergone extensive federal evaluation and were adopted because they provide significant environmental advantages compared with the substances they replaced.

Maintaining exemptions for these applications allows New Mexico to continue benefiting from established federal scientific determinations while avoiding unintended consequences associated with removing critical technologies before practical alternatives are available.

Polyiso and Polyurethane Insulation Are Essential Products

Polyiso and polyurethane insulation are essential materials used throughout New Mexico and the United States in:

- Commercial roofs
- Schools and hospitals
- Manufacturing facilities
- Refrigerated and cold-storage buildings
- Data centers
- Residential and commercial construction

These products help reduce energy demand, lower utility costs, improve building resilience, and support state and national energy-efficiency objectives.

Any policy changes that restrict access to high-performance insulation technologies should carefully consider the lifecycle environmental benefits these products provide and whether substitute technologies can deliver equivalent performance.

Recommendation

We respectfully recommend that NMED conclude that exemptions should remain in place for PFAS-containing products that utilize EPA SNAP-approved substitutes for ozone-depleting substances, including HFO blowing agents used in polyisocyanurate and polyurethane insulation products.

At a minimum, any future consideration of modifying or removing such exemptions should be conditioned upon a clear demonstration that technically feasible, commercially viable, and environmentally superior alternatives exist that can provide equivalent product performance, safety, durability, and energy-efficiency benefits.

Preserving these exemptions will support continued environmental progress, maintain access to critical energy-saving building materials, and avoid unintended consequences that could undermine broader sustainability and climate objectives.