

# 2024



# Retailer Report Card

Ranking retailers on toxic chemicals

The 2024 Retailer Report Card reveals that most retailers in the United States and Canada are failing to ensure that the products and packaging on store shelves are made with the safest chemicals and materials.

The 2024 updated version of the Retailer Report Card raised the bar for retailers, prioritizing more heavily whether retailers are requiring the assessment of chemical ingredients and avoiding the most hazardous chemicals and plastics, largely derived from oil and gas, in products and packaging, resulting in safer solutions.



## SCORING SUMMARY

**Overall, the average grade of 50 retailers was D+.**

Many retailers have not taken basic steps to ensure the safety of the products they sell.

### A total of 17 retailers earned failing grades (F):

- 7-Eleven
- Ahold Delhaize
- Alimentation Couche-Tard
- Chipotle
- Five Below
- Inspire Brands
- LL Flooring (Lumber Liquidators)
- Macy's
- McDonald's
- Nordstrom
- Publix
- Sally Beauty
- Sherwin-Williams
- Sobeys
- Subway
- Trader Joe's
- Yum! Brands

### Four retailers received the highest grades:

- Apple (A)
- Sephora (A-)
- Target (A-)
- Walmart (A-)

### The next tier of retailers that earned the highest marks:

- Whole Foods Market (B)
- IKEA (B)
- Ulta Beauty (B-)

**Ulta Beauty** earns the distinction as the **most improved retailer of 2024**, nearly doubling its score from 2021 to 2024.

## WHAT ARE THE FOUR ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS FOR A SAFER MARKETPLACE?



### **CORPORATE COMMITMENT:**

Evaluates the retailer's adoption of a corporate safer chemicals policy, participation in the Chemical Footprint Project, external collaboration, and support of public policies.



### **TRANSPARENCY:**

Evaluates a retailer's knowledge of hazardous chemicals and plastics in the products and packaging it sells, public disclosure of chemicals and plastics to consumers, and accountability measures to ensure supplier compliance with restrictions on hazardous chemicals and plastics.



### **BAN THE BAD:**

Evaluates the scope of hazardous chemicals and plastics a retailer currently prohibits, quantifiable time-bound goals to reduce and eliminate hazardous chemicals and plastics, and progress in reducing and eliminating high-priority chemicals, chemical classes, and plastics of high concern.



### **SAFER SOLUTIONS:**

Evaluates a retailer's implementation of safer solutions, such as the sale of truly safer products, financial investments in safer solutions, and the steps it is taking to ensure suppliers are transitioning to safer chemicals and products.

## ■ FINDINGS BY ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

The 2024 Retailer Report Card establishes, for the first time, an enhanced grading system called *The Four Essential Elements for a Safer Marketplace*. For each of the elements, our report finds:

### **CORPORATE COMMITMENT**

**More than half of retailers committed to adopting safer chemical policies: 56 percent of retailers have a corporate commitment to avoid the use of chemicals and plastics of high concern.** Retailers on average were most likely to earn points for Corporate Commitment, primarily through adopting safer chemicals policies. Unfortunately, these commitments were not always backed up by sufficient action to ensure safer solutions.

### **TRANSPARENCY**

**More than half of retailers, 54 percent, are NOT asking suppliers for information on ingredients in products or packaging.** Most retailers do not ask their suppliers for any ingredient information. Except for cleaning products, personal care products, and cosmetics, most products don't come with a chemical ingredient label. Without knowing what chemicals or plastics are being used, it is impossible for retailers to assess the hazards. This leaves customers and retailers in the dark about the safety of products. Only a

few retailers, like Apple, have made meaningful progress in advancing supply chain disclosure of chemicals in other kinds of products.

### **BAN THE BAD**

**Most retailers are banning dangerous chemicals and harmful plastics: 68 percent of retailers have made progress reducing toxic chemicals and plastics through Ban the Bad policies.** Retailers continue to make progress banning hazardous chemicals and plastics. Responding to growing public and regulatory pressure, many retailers are taking steps to reduce or eliminate specific chemicals and materials, such as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), also known as "forever chemicals," and polyvinyl chloride (PVC), the "poison plastic." Unfortunately, most retailers are not using this opportunity to ensure that replacements are safer.

### **SAFER SOLUTIONS**

**Minimal progress is being made on safer solutions, with 80 percent of retailers failing to ensure safer solutions to toxic chemicals and plastics.** A critical component to achieve safer products and packaging is to assess the hazards of chemicals and plastics and to choose the least hazardous. The majority of retailers do not have any criteria for safer products and packaging. The report card holds companies to a standard of "safer"














adopted by the state of Washington, which is the only regulatory definition in the country. Only a handful of companies are leading the pack in this Safer Solutions category, including Apple, Target, Amazon, Walmart, and Sephora—proving that it is possible to implement corporate policies that both restrict toxic chemicals and plastics and drive the market to safer solutions. Both Sephora and Ulta Beauty, for example, are making the grade using innovative programs like ChemFORWARD's Know Better Do Better, which is helping beauty retailers assess the hazards of thousands of ingredients and increase the use of those that are safer.

## ■ NOTABLE SECTOR CONCERNS

**Lowest scores went to restaurants and dollar store chains:** Restaurant chains and dollar stores ranked, on average, the lowest among the retailer sectors evaluated. Retailers in these sectors must step up to protect consumers, especially low-income communities and communities of color, that tend to frequent many of these chains.



















# 2024 Retailer Report Card - Retailer Scores

## Grades and Percent of Total Possible Points Earned by Element

Retailer	Percent of points earned				Grade
	Corporate Commitment 	Transparency 	Ban the Bad 	Safer Solutions 	
 7-Eleven	0%	0%	0%	0%	<b>F</b>
 Ahold Delhaize	0%	0%	12%	0%	<b>F</b>
 Albertson's	18%	5%	20%	12%	<b>D-</b>
 ALDI	60%	14%	31%	0%	<b>D+</b>
 Alimentation Couche-Tard	0%	0%	0%	0%	<b>F</b>
 Amazon	43%	25%	41%	54%	<b>C+</b>
 Apple	73%	76%	96%	86%	<b>A</b>
 Best Buy	60%	23%	53%	16%	<b>C</b>
 Canadian Tire	60%	14%	38%	6%	<b>D+</b>



















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	Corporate Commitment 	Transparency 	Ban the Bad 	Safer Solutions 	
 Chipotle	13%	1%	16%	0%	<b>F</b>
 Costco	48%	23%	37%	12%	<b>C-</b>
 CVS Health	65%	26%	31%	12%	<b>C-</b>
 Dick's Sporting Goods	13%	8%	53%	12%	<b>D+</b>
 Dollar General	60%	15%	22%	6%	<b>D+</b>
 Dollar Tree	68%	17%	18%	0%	<b>D</b>
 Five Below	0%	0%	0%	0%	<b>F</b>
 IKEA	73%	58%	67%	40%	<b>B</b>
 Inspire Brands	0%	0%	22%	0%	<b>F</b>
 Kohl's	60%	9%	40%	0%	<b>D+</b>
 Kroger	48%	26%	41%	0%	<b>C-</b>
 LL Flooring (Lumber Liquidators)	0%	0%	4%	0%	<b>F</b>
 Loblaw Companies Limited	25%	5%	29%	6%	<b>D</b>
 Lowe's	60%	35%	67%	20%	<b>C+</b>


















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		Corporate Commitment 	Transparency 	Ban the Bad 	Safer Solutions 	
	Retailer					
	Macy's	18%	0%	12%	0%	F
	McDonald's	0%	5%	24%	0%	F
	Metro	48%	0%	14%	6%	D-
	Nordstrom	0%	5%	24%	0%	F
	Office Depot	48%	17%	33%	22%	C-
	Panera Bread	13%	36%	49%	0%	C-
	PetSmart	13%	28%	13%	0%	D-
	Publix	0%	0%	0%	0%	F
	REI	73%	26%	33%	18%	C
	Restaurant Brands International	13%	0%	31%	0%	D-
	Rite Aid	58%	32%	41%	6%	C-
	Sally Beauty	0%	0%	0%	0%	F
	Sephora	73%	86%	75%	48%	A-
	Sherwin-Williams	0%	0%	0%	0%	F

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Retailer		Percent of points earned				Grade
		Corporate Commitment 	Transparency 	Ban the Bad 	Safer Solutions 	
	Sobeys	13%	0%	6%	5%	<b>F</b>
	Staples	65%	22%	18%	28%	<b>C-</b>
	Starbucks	13%	0%	42%	6%	<b>D</b>
	Subway	0%	0%	24%	0%	<b>F</b>
	Target	73%	36%	92%	60%	<b>A-</b>
	The Home Depot	60%	12%	62%	0%	<b>C-</b>
	TJX	43%	0%	31%	12%	<b>D</b>
	Trader Joe's	0%	0%	0%	0%	<b>F</b>
	Ulta Beauty	60%	69%	53%	20%	<b>B-</b>
	Walgreens	60%	36%	57%	6%	<b>C</b>
	Walmart	100%	54%	75%	50%	<b>A-</b>
	Whole Foods Market	80%	67%	75%	20%	<b>B</b>
	Yum! Brands	13%	0%	22%	0%	<b>F</b>