

## press release

### High user safety of laser printers and copiers confirmed

- **The Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR): "No evidence of specific health problems as a result of toner emissions."**
- **Clinical research conducted in 63 German office cubicles resulted in no specific health complaints from the test subjects**

**Berlin, 22 February 2007**

Clinical research showed no evidence of health effects from the use of laser printers and copiers, according to a comprehensive judgment in the second preliminary report of a study on the safety of laser printer systems. The Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) commissioned the study. Yesterday, the accompanying medical investigations and health inquiries of laser printers and copiers in German office cubicles were introduced before an expert group. The scientists tested participants' lung function and measured inflammation and allergy parameters through laboratory blood tests. According to the BfR, "these biochemical parameters indicated no specific health damage for people whose health complaints are attributed to toner emissions from laser printer or copiers." Results from the first preliminary report are underlined where the so-called real room measurements in offices yielded no evidence of particular health dangers. A final report of the study is expected in summer 2007.

Altogether, 69 employees in 63 cubicles were tested. Throughout the process, individual medical findings of test subjects were considered. Elaborate inquiries to subjective health conditions were recorded and comprehensive clinical research was conducted. Medical tests showed no casual evidence of health complaints due to the use of laser printers and copiers—independent of the test subjects' current subjective health conditions. Thereby the results of a first preliminary report of indoor air measurements in test subjects' offices were verified. Neither investigations of the material and particulate emissions nor the burden/load of

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mold yielded evidence to any particular health risks through laser printers and copiers.

According to Philipp Karch, environmental expert for the industry organisation BITKOM: "The preliminary report of the BfR studies serve as further evidence that modern laser printing systems, even in real appliance, offer a high level of user safety." Correspondingly, Professor Dr. med. D. Nowak, occupational medic at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München: "According to my knowledge, there is no evidence of any negative health side effects for the average user due to toners, VOCs and other materials. A correlation between laser printers and incidental, isolated cases is slightly possible."

For more than 20 years, the safety of laser printers and copy systems has been shown in daily practice. Worldwide, millions of users have shown no evidence of possible health complaints.

Producers strictly regulate the user safety of their toners in accordance with the EU directive 1999/45/EG. They contain no concentrations of elements that would necessitate a categorisation and labelling as hazardous. The entire laser printing systems are examined in a complex test chamber for the measurements of possible emissions in accordance with the international standard ECMA-328. Potential devices emissions, such as dust or volatile organic compounds, lie far below authoritative German, European and American office limits as well as the indoor guidelines of the WHO and the severe inhalation standards of the US authority EPA.

Professor Dr. U. Ewers, toxicologist at the Hygiene-Institut des Ruhrgebiets in Gelsenkirchen, summarised the scientific state of knowledge:

"No scientific evidence has previously existed that demonstrates that the use of modern laser printers and copy devices in the workplace and living spaces causes increased health damage through toner emissions, volatile organic compounds or other materials. The amount of laser printers and copiers at indoor dust exposure is rather insignificant. The entry of dust from outside air is clearly larger, through activities such as tobacco smoke and vacuuming."

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The preliminary report of the study and the BfR's press release can be found under [www.bfr.bund.de](http://www.bfr.bund.de).

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