FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EPA’S CHEMICAL ACTION PLAN PROCESS SHOULD CONSIDER CRITICAL USES FOR HBCD

ARLINGTON, VA (Aug. 18, 2010) – The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today released an action plan on HBCD (hexabromocyclododecane). The following is a statement from Mike Walls, ACC vice president of regulatory and technical affairs.

“The chemical industry supports modernizing the way chemicals are managed. We want the public to have confidence in the strength of our regulatory system and in the products used in commerce. At the same time, we remain concerned that the EPA chemical action plan process does not include a transparent science-based approach to chemical assessment and chemical management. EPA has a responsibility to assess the actual risk of a chemical, review the weight of evidence of all scientific studies, and evaluate the specific uses of a chemical, as well as the availability, performance and safety of functional alternatives.

“Industry supports the safe production and use of HBCD and will work with the agency as it implements its action plan. But because it is not clear if the action plan process is grounded in a thorough scientific review – including the review of possible alternatives – we are concerned about how the review has been conducted. We ask EPA to ensure that the process of developing chemical action plans includes a transparent, disciplined and thorough scientific process, so that all stakeholders understand the basis for EPA’s intended actions.”

About HBCD (hexabromocyclododecane)

HBCD is a flame retardant used in certain types of insulation, textiles coatings, and electronics. HBCD has unique functional and beneficial properties, including protecting human lives and property from fire. Flame retardants save lives, reduce injuries and help prevent damaging fires. In addition, polystyrene foam insulation made with HBCD makes a significant contribution to the energy efficiency of homes and buildings, helping to minimize fossil fuel use and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The safety of polystyrene foam insulation made with HBCD has been researched extensively and evaluated by regulatory bodies in numerous countries. Most recently, a comprehensive risk assessment by the European Union identified no health risk to consumers from HBCD use in polystyrene foam insulation. Specifically the EU concluded: “HBCD in PS [polystyrene] foams does not pose any risk to consumers and PS foams are safe to use.”

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The American Chemistry Council (ACC) represents the leading companies engaged in the business of chemistry. ACC members apply the science of chemistry to make innovative products and services that make people’s lives better, healthier and safer. ACC is committed to improved environmental, health and safety performance through Responsible Care®, common sense advocacy designed to address major public policy issues, and health and environmental research and product testing. The business of chemistry is a $674 billion enterprise and a key element of the nation’s economy. It is one of the nation’s largest exporters, accounting for ten cents out of every dollar in U.S. exports. Chemistry companies are among the largest investors in research and development. Safety and security have always been primary concerns of ACC members, and they have intensified their efforts, working closely with government agencies to improve security and to defend against any threat to the nation’s critical infrastructure.