

## What Is Up with All the Cancer Warnings?

We have received quite a few questions lately about the Cancer and/or Birth Defect warnings on some of our products. We hope this helps you have a better understanding of the purpose of the labels. If you have any questions about a particular product, please contact us.

These labels are in response to the state of California's Proposition 65 also known as the *California Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986*. It is basically designed to inform Californian consumers of any chemical / substance that could possibly cause birth defects, cancer, etc. if a person ingested, inhaled or absorbed enough of the item.

Even though the label is only required in California, we do not always know where our products may be sold so it is more efficient to label all of the products in most cases. We are also very focused on responsible advertising so believe this helps you be more safety conscious.

You can find the complete list of chemicals and substances identified by Proposition 65 here: [Chemicals Considered or Listed Under Proposition 65](#)

For the most part your risk is low if you take standard safety precautions (see below). Proposition 65 sets a very low threshold for warnings. For birth defects, warnings are required at one-thousandth the level at which a certain chemical is shown to cause birth defects. For example, with lead (in all brass) it is a maximum of 0.5 micrograms /liter of lead per day. This is below the amount of lead in the average serving size of most balsamic vinegars.

Here are some (not all) of the materials / products we sell that are labeled and why:

**Micarta, Wood, G10** – dust / fiberglass (G10) particles are emitted into the air during work.

**Brass** – contains lead.

**Nickel Silver** – contains Nickel

**Stainless Steel** – contains chromium which is a know carcinogen however the Finish Institute of Occupational Heath conducted a study in 2010 of steel factory workers and found that "...stainless steel is likely to exert very low toxicity" [Review the study here](#) (PDF download).

**Precautions** - any type of dust or particulate if breathed in has the potential to coat the lungs and possibly cause cancer over time. We strongly encourage the use of respiratory masks for any and all grinding, sanding, finishing that results in particles in the air. Additionally, wearing protective clothing like gloves, aprons, jumpsuits, etc. can prevent any absorption through your skin as well as contamination of your household from carrying particles inside.

Proposition 65 and its regulations are [posted here](#) if you wish to learn more.