



Product stewardship

Designing and consistently manufacturing safe, high-quality products that are effective and have the confidence of the people who use them is the cornerstone of our approach to product stewardship. We establish and adhere to internal policies, meeting and exceeding legal requirements, to ensure we are acting responsibly and adopting the highest standards of safety, quality and regulatory compliance.

1. Business fundamentals

Our ambition to be the world's best consumer health, hygiene and home company is built on maintaining a strong foundation of safety, quality and regulatory compliance. We continually improve our processes, enhance our infrastructure and embed a culture of safety and quality to continually strengthen that foundation of product stewardship.

2. Ingredients

As science evolves and expectations shift, we continually look forward, beyond legislative requirements, to support the safety and sustainability of the ingredients we use.

3. Transparency

Consumers have a right to know what is in the products they purchase. We are committed to providing access to ingredient information that consumers can use and understand.

1. Business fundamentals

We believe that our business cannot succeed without a solid foundation in safety, quality and regulatory compliance (SQRC). In 2018, we continued significant SQRC work involving system, data and process improvements, all complemented by further strengthening our team with additional expertise and improving our existing knowledge base.

Consumer safety

The Consumer Safety team is an integral part of our SQRC approach and assure the development of safe products. They are responsible for ensuring that the safety of all new products and reformulations is evaluated based on their intended use and foreseeable misuse. They also monitor the safety of our products in the market, report adverse experiences to the relevant authorities and provide safety insights to our product development teams.

Our Consumer Safety policy ensures safety is an integral part of our product development process and points out guidelines, standards and procedures that are implemented throughout the product life cycle – from conception through market delivery and post-launch market surveillance.

The Consumer Safety team works closely with other business partners. For example, they partner with Supply to ensure the appropriate raw materials are used and with Category Development to ensure the product is responsibly packaged and that appropriate precautionary and safety language is provided on the product label. In 2018, we completed Safety Evaluations for all of RB's global product portfolio, a process we apply to all new or changed products.



[Click here for more information on SQRC governance in our Sustainability Governance and Strategy Insight.](#)



[Click here to read more about SQRC in our Annual Report.](#)

Product quality and consumer satisfaction

We are committed to consistently delivering the highest quality of products. We build in quality at the product design stage and aim to minimise quality risks across our supply chain, preventing quality issues before they arise. Our Quality organisation comprises global, area, regional and site-level quality assurance functions that oversee and monitor process and product quality. We regularly audit key suppliers to assure and continuously improve the quality of raw materials, components and finished products.

RB is committed to providing consumers with the highest level of product quality. In support of this, our Consumer Relations department relay consumer comments and complaints to the organisation to ensure continuous improvement of our products, maintaining the trust and loyalty of our consumers.

On World Quality Day 2018, we launched our new 'Quality Vision' and embedded this by holding Quality Days at each RB site, alongside a campaign that embeds a culture of responsibility with all 40,000+ RB employees.

Product stewardship continued

2. Ingredients

Beyond regulations, RB safeguards consumers by taking a global approach to ingredient management. This includes controlling the use of known ingredients of potential concern through a Restricted Substances List (RSL), proactively reviewing emerging science via an Ingredient Steering Committee, and promoting the selection of safer, more sustainable alternatives.



In 2018, RB took part for the first time in the Chemical Footprint Project (www.chemicalfootprint.org) to benchmark our approach to chemicals management, inventory, measurement, public disclosure and verification. Signatories to this approach include investors, retailers, health care organisations, governments and NGOs and represent over \$2.8 trillion in assets under management.

RB will continue to use this benchmark to guide evolution of our strategy and processes. Since the acquisition of Mead Johnson Nutrition, RB has also invested significant resource into IT infrastructure for the efficient management of ingredient and product data. Although it is a multi-year programme, the new chemical inventory systems will significantly enhance our ingredient management and footprint measurement and enable greater transparency throughout the supply chain.

Safe, effective alternatives

In 2017, we established an internal Ingredient Steering Committee that consists of leaders from across R&D, Safety, Regulatory and Sustainability functions. This group works to identify and escalate emerging ingredient issues to provide a consolidated RB view and, where relevant, coordinate associated reformulation work and the adoption of safe and effective alternatives.

For example, the availability of a wide and safe range of preservatives is one of the key challenges facing industry today. It is critical that our products are in the best possible condition when they reach consumers and that is why we use preservatives where necessary to prevent any microbial growth or undesirable changes. However, preservatives have been under increasing scrutiny due to consumer concerns and regulatory restrictions, and hence preservatives are a priority focus area for the development of safe and effective alternatives.

In response, our Ingredient Steering Committee established a global cross-functional task-force to screen novel, safe, alternative preservatives and compounds that we can use across our portfolio. We have developed a rigorous screening and testing strategy so that we can make sure any new preservatives we use are effective and safe and are setting up collaborative programmes with industry groups and suppliers to help grow the availability and use of these safe and effective alternatives.

In addition, we are partnering with external organisations to promote the safe and sustainable design of alternative ingredients:

- RB is a member of the Green Chemistry Commerce Council (GC3) (<https://greenchemistryandcommerce.org/>) and was one of the sponsors for the GC3 preservative challenge competition, which aimed to identify and accelerate to market new safe and effective preservatives. In 2018, we also joined GC3's Sustainable Chemistry Alliance group which is focused on policies that can accelerate the development and scale-up of new sustainable chemistry processes and products in the USA.

- We are also working with an EU Environment Directorate-General (<http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/environment>) expert group, to advise the EU Commission on policy needs to advance the development of safe and sustainable chemistries and management of hazardous chemistries.
- We have also recently joined Chemsec's MarketPlace (<https://marketplace.chemsec.org>), a website designed to help find alternatives to hazardous chemicals with the intent of sending clear market signals on the need for safer and sustainable alternatives.

To help ensure that RB develops products that have the lowest possible environmental impact, we apply some the key concepts of green chemistry, adapted for product development:

- Waste prevention
- Design for energy efficiency
- Design for degradation/reuse/recyclability
- Design for bio-based/use of renewable raw materials



Click here to read more about plastics and packaging waste.



Click here to read more about sustainable innovation.



Click here to read more about our sustainable sourcing of natural raw materials.



Product stewardship continued

CASE STUDY

GC3 partnership

“RB is widely respected as a brand leader in sustainability, and has long been a chemical safety leader in the consumer products industry. We were delighted when they joined the GC3 four years ago. We have seen the company’s commitment to Green Chemistry first hand in their active support of the GC3 Preservatives Project, a collaborative effort to find new, safe and effective preservatives for use in personal care and household products. Similarly, they have taken a leadership role in helping launch our GC3 Sustainable Chemistry Alliance to work on government policy that expands the development, production and use of more sustainable chemicals.

“It’s no surprise that RB was honored last year as a 2018 Safer Choice Partner of the Year by the US EPA, given RB’s commitment to green chemistry and their role in helping consumers gain access to safer, better products. They make a real difference in the GC3’s mission to drive the commercial adoption of green chemistry.”

Joel Tickner
Director of GC3



Click here for more information on:
GC3 partnership

Restricted Substances List (RSL)

Our RSL ensures a consistent global approach towards minimising and eliminating ingredients of potential concern, which is central to ensuring product developers can innovate responsibly. The RSL has evolved to become a vital part of our product development process and is owned by the Executive Vice-Presidents of the Category Development Organisation for each Business Unit, reporting to the President of the Business Unit.

The RSL is governed by the Ingredient Steering Committee, with priority ingredients going through an assessment of applicable regulations, consumer and environmental safety, sustainability, public perception, and the identification of potential risks and opportunities for substitution with safe, effective and/or environmentally friendly alternatives.

Based on these reviews, RB globally sets limits and/or bans on the use of certain ingredients in products beyond what is mandated by regulation. We also maintain an RSL watch-list, which is comprised of ingredients with emerging concerns or evolving standards.

Innovation teams designing new products or engaged in the rework of existing products are guided by the RSL, but also proactively engage with suppliers to obtain information on materials purchased (e.g. substances of potential concern).

The RSL is embedded within our Consumer Safety process and is considered every time an ingredient or product is assessed. Further detail can be found in our RSL policy, which defines our commitment and approach.

In 2018 we phased out some products while adjusting others and improving packaging and labelling. We also launched new internal tools to strengthen compliance to the RSL. This also simplified adoption of our new global restrictions on the use of cyclic siloxanes and tightening restrictions on isothiazolinones and fragrance ingredients. We have also removed microplastic beads, triclocarban and fluorosurfactants from our global product portfolio.



Click here to read our RSL policy.





Product stewardship continued

3. Transparency

Consumers have a right to know what is in the products they purchase, and we are committed to providing access to ingredient information above and beyond legislative requirements. We have an ambition to provide 100% transparency on ingredients to enable our consumers to make informed decisions through clear labelling on all RB products, and online information. We are continuing to strengthen this across our product range.

Product label transparency initiatives

Our Hygiene Home Business Unit began introducing an 'ingredient panel' on product packaging to clearly communicate ingredient benefits to consumers and will continue rolling this out across brands and geographies.



Online transparency initiatives

Our North America ingredient website contains full ingredient listing, ingredient function and disclosure of any of the 26 EU-identified fragrance allergens over 100 ppm. We are currently working to expand this and will update by January 2020 to include:

- Comprehensive disclosure of all individual fragrance ingredients that are present over 100 ppm as well as disclosure of any fragrance ingredients below 100 ppm that are on one of 25+ recognised hazard lists.
- Ability to view the ingredient list by function as well as by weight percentage.
- Ability to view all information in the new [GMA SmartLabel](#) format.
- Disclosure of any of 34 chemicals of high concern that are present as contaminants or impurities.

This forms part of our wider ambition to expand our digital disclosure across the globe.



[Click here to read our ingredient list for North America and Canada.](#)



[Click here to read our ingredient list for Europe.](#)

Animal testing

RB is committed to eliminating unnecessary animal testing by applying the principles of '3Rs' (Reduce, Refine and Replace) and using non-animal approaches to ensure the safety of RB products wherever feasible. RB has a strict policy on animal testing.



[Click here to read our Animal Testing policy.](#)