

TPO IN PROFESSIONAL NAIL PRODUCTS

CAN PROFESSIONALS CONTINUE TO USE TPO-CONTAINING PRODUCTS AFTER THE BAN COMES INTO FORCE?

KEY MESSAGE

Nail techs in Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) can continue to use products containing TPO on clients after the “making available on the market” deadline of 14th February 2027, provided those products were purchased before this date. This position is supported by the enforcement body Trading Standards’ interpretation of the UK Cosmetics Regulation.



WHAT IS THE CTPA?

Representing all types of companies involved in making, supplying and selling cosmetic and personal care products, the Cosmetic, Toiletry and Perfumery Association Limited (CTPA) is the authoritative voice of a vibrant and responsible UK industry.

WHAT IS THE NHBF?

The National Hair & Beauty Federation (NHBF) is the UK’s largest trade association for hairdressing, barbering, beauty, and aesthetics industries. It provides business owners with essential resources, legal advice, employment contracts, and industry advocacy to help them stay safe, compliant, and profitable.

WHAT IS TPO?

Trimethylbenzoyl diphenylphosphine oxide (TPO) is an ingredient used in UV/LED-cured nail products as a ‘photoinitiator’. This means it helps the gel curing process by starting the chemical reaction (polymerisation) that creates the hard-wearing, durable nail surface.

WHAT IS CHANGING?

The UK Government has amended the UK Cosmetics Regulation to ban the use of TPO in cosmetic products placed on the market in Great Britain.

The key dates are:

DATE	REQUIREMENT
15th August 2026	Manufacturers can no longer place new cosmetic products containing TPO on the market in Great Britain.
14th February 2027	Products containing TPO can no longer be made available on the market in Great Britain. This means they can no longer be purchased by professionals.

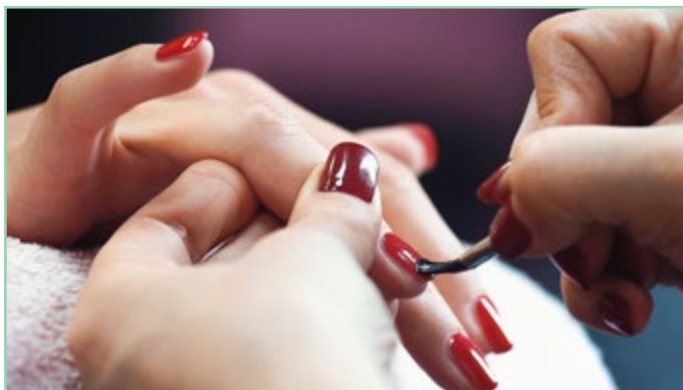
ARE PRODUCTS WHICH CONTAIN TPO UNSAFE?

TPO-containing nail products are still safe.

TPO received a classification under a piece of chemicals law called CLP (Classification, Labelling and Packaging). This classification is based on how TPO might behave under a “worst case” scenario. When eaten in very large quantities, it may have effects on fertility. However, this is completely different from the way that TPO is used in cosmetic products.

The amount of TPO used in nail products is over a thousand times less than the amount which could cause harm when ingested. Also, TPO is applied to the nail which means there is only a tiny amount of possible absorption into our bodies.

All these factors are taken into account through the legally-required, robust safety assessment which all cosmetic products must undergo before being sold.



IF THE CONCERN COMES FROM A DIFFERENT PIECE OF CHEMICALS LEGISLATION, WHY HAS TPO BEEN BANNED IN COSMETIC PRODUCTS?

If a substance receives a certain classification under the CLP chemicals law, it must meet a strict set of criteria to continue being used as a cosmetic ingredient:

- The substance is safe when used in cosmetics
- There are no possible alternative ingredients
- The substance is used as a food ingredient

Despite its safety as a cosmetic ingredient, industry could not meet the two other requirements (lack of alternatives and presence in food), meaning that TPO is being banned.

DO PROFESSIONALS NEED TO THROW AWAY EXISTING TPO-CONTAINING STOCK ON 14TH FEBRUARY 2027?

No. If TPO-containing products were purchased before the 14 February 2027 deadline and they remain in the professional's possession, they may continue to be used professionally on clients after 14 February 2027. What changes is that professionals will no longer be able to buy additional TPO-containing products in Great Britain after that date.



TRADING STANDARDS' VIEW

CTPA has discussed with Trading Standards the interpretation of the UK Cosmetics Regulation regarding professional use after “making available” deadlines. Trading Standards is the government body responsible for enforcing the UK Cosmetics Regulation. Both CTPA and Trading Standards are aligned that professional users may continue to use products already obtained before the deadline. This interpretation is further supported by Primary Authority ‘Assured Advice’ issued through the CTPA Primary Authority Partnership, which formalises the Trading Standards view that TPO-containing products purchased before the 14 February 2027 deadline may continue to be used professionally on clients after 14 February 2027.

Richard Knight, CTSI Lead Officer for Cosmetics and Beauty says:

“Trading Standards is pleased to partner with CTPA and NHBF in helping to provide clarity to salons and their insurers on this topic. TPO-containing nail gels purchased from reputable suppliers before the sell-through deadline of 14th February 2027, can legally continue to be used until stocks are naturally exhausted. Anyone who wishes to report any suspected illegal cosmetic product, including nail gels, can alert Trading Standards via the Government funded **Citizens’ Advice Consumer Helpline 0808 223 1133.**”

