

# Toxic 3 Os

September 15, 2021

**In news**— Recently, US activists and politicians demanded the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to reclassify ‘Toxic 3 Os’ used in sunscreen.

## Key updates

- A coalition of 60 environmental groups, community leaders, academics and businesses submitted a **Citizen Petition to the FDA, calling for the reclassification of oxybenzone, octinoxate and octocrylene.**
- They urged that **these chemicals be shifted to “Not Generally Recognized as Safe & Effective” (GRASE Category II).**
- They also called for the removal of products that contained these chemicals from the marketplace.
- The **petition was prompted by the chemicals’ health risks and the negative impacts to waterways and coastlines.**
- Oxybenzone, octinoxate and octocrylene, along with 11 other Soluble Organic UV Filters, were removed from the GRASE Category I (generally recognized as safe & effective) list in February 2019.
- Because the public record does not currently contain sufficient data to support positive GRASE determinations.
- They have since been designated GRASE Category III “insufficient data for use in sunscreens” while continuing to be widely available.

## About Toxic 3 Os-

- Toxic 3 Os refers to **Oxybenzone, octinoxate and octocrylene.**
- They **are active ingredients present in more than two-thirds of all sunscreens.**
- They pose **a threat to public health, marine life and**

**coral reefs.**

- **Octocrylene in sun protection products degrades into benzophenone**, a carcinogen that can also interfere with key hormones and reproductive organs.
- The “Toxic 3 Os” have been shown to **destroy coral and trigger health risks to people and marine life.**
- They **cause human cell damage that has been linked to cancer, disrupt hormones**, have been found in breast milk, blood and urine and are known allergens.
- **They wash off people’s bodies** when they swim and contaminate through waste water runoff and **cause ‘zombie’ coral which looks healthy but is unable to reproduce, coral bleaching** as well as other issues.
- **Oxybenzone is particularly toxic to corals** at concentrations as low as a few parts per trillion, the equivalent of three drops in an Olympic-size swimming pool may be enough to severely damage or kill coral.
- **Octinoxate, also called Octyl methoxycinnamate or OMC**, is a chemical commonly used in cosmetic and skin care products around the world.
- **This chemical was first produced in the 1950s to filter out the sun’s UV-B rays.** That means it can help shield your skin from sunburn and skin cancer.
- Octocrylene is used as an ingredient in sunscreens and cosmetics and is a viscous, oily liquid that is clear and colorless.