

Newsletter

4 How does ECHA check dossier quality?

ECHA performs two kinds of compliance checks: overall checks, going through the whole dossier, and targeted checks, focusing on specific endpoints. Learn more about what happens in both kinds of checks.

6 From an info card to detailed source data - ECHA's plans for chemicals communication

ECHA has published on its website over 98% of the information on chemicals submitted to it. The next step is to improve the user-friendliness and accessibility of this information. The aim is to have a new interface that also serves the needs of the general public ready in 2015.

16 How to get EU-wide authorisation for a biocidal product

Do you want to market your biocidal product in all EU countries or in a number of them? We explain how to do it.

20 Generating safe use information for mixtures – status and next steps

Our guest writers from the European Chemical Industry Council and the Downstream Users of Chemicals Coordination Group are returning on the topic of generating safe use information for mixtures. The two associations have identified approaches and methods used or being developed by companies and industry sectors for safe use communication. Read more what about their findings.



Building for the future

Our work programme for this year is built around the theme of building for the future. The first years for ECHA have focused getting everything ready so that companies could meet the legal milestones, like the REACH registration deadlines in 2010 and 2013, the CLP deadline in 2011 and the entry into operation of the biocides regulation.

In 2014, we want to take stock of all that experience and learn lessons for the future. One simple example is our IT systems like REACH-IT. If we want to simplify the way it works, we need to make those decisions now, so that we can rebuild it in good time for companies to use it in the run up to the 2018 registration deadline.

We have set ourselves a five-year plan, which is based on **four strategic objectives**. To be able to meet our first strategic objective - to improve the quality of information - we need to work together with the Commission, the national authorities and industry. We want to find new ways of raising compliance and improving the quality of registrations. For the 2010 and 2013 registrations, this goal will be achieved as we evaluate and take decisions on dossiers. For the upcoming 2018 deadline, when many more small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) will come into play for the first time, we reviewing our tools and guidance to make them clearer and easier to use as well as examining the barriers that SMEs face and trying to overcome them.

To set the foundations for the second strategic objective on intelligent use of information to deal with chemicals of concern, ECHA will put in motion the plan for getting all the relevant substances of very high concern to the Candidate List by 2020 - in close cooperation with the Member States and the European Commission of course. The high-level principles and the implementation plan were agreed at the end of 2013.

Best practise from Hungary

Learning chemical safety through play

TEXT BY MR ANDRÁS TENDELITS, HEAD OF EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS OF THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER AND MS SZILVIA DEIM DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CHEMICAL SAFETY

Board games, colouring books, stories and cards – all to teach children about hazard symbols and chemical safety in general. A programme developed by local chemical safety inspectors in Hungary has become extremely successful, involving 3 500 children, their parents and 200 teachers over recent years.

According to the annual report of the National Institute of Chemical Safety, children are involved in up to 20% of human poisoning cases in Hungary. Therefore, chemical safety inspectors in Somogy County, in the southern part of Hungary, started a new prevention programme aimed at nursery schools to avoid accidents with chemicals. The programme – called ‘Learn it! - Beware of the risks!’ – was the inspectors’ own initiative planned outside work time.

The programme was extremely well received on the annual Chemical Safety Day organised by the national competent authority; its popularity exceeding the work on water pollution, endocrine disruptors and enforcement practices.

ENCOURAGING RESULTS

The Hungarian inspectors contacted nursery schools to establish a partnership. The aim was to familiarise children with hazard symbols and their meanings. The programme

also involved parents, providing them with useful information about key questions like how to store and use chemical agents.

A whole collection of educational materials was developed by the inspectors to promote the initiative including posters, educational stories and nursery rhymes, board games and interactive sessions. The purpose was not only to teach children something new but also to focus on the knowledge that they already have.

To measure the knowledge of the children before and after the lessons, the inspectors used a test sheet with eight exercises to be filled with stickers. Before the programme, the children got on average only two or three answers correct. They typically recognised the symbols indicating toxic and environmentally hazardous chemicals. Three weeks later, when the programme had finished, the children were able to correctly answer at least six or even seven questions out of eight.

AWARD WINNING INITIATIVE TO CONTINUE?

Chemical safety education helps children to recognise danger as well as making them more aware of health and environmental hazards. Education also helps children to recognise the importance of risks posed by chemicals. Furthermore, not only is the initiative important for the children, but even the kindergarten teachers said that it is very useful to get to know more about toxicity and the safe use of chemicals.

The ‘Learn it! - Beware of the risks!’ initiative won the United Way Hungary’s Safety Award in 2010 and was further developed for elementary school children by the colleagues of the health authority in another county. However, further success of the programme will depend on the availability of financial resources.

Further information:

TV package of the programme
<http://youtu.be/02AnKcw0WzI>



Examples of the material produced for the Hungarian CLP programme, and children playing.

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