

REACH – chemicals regulation with vision

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A new European Community (EC) directive is giving people in industry and trade plenty to talk about. On June 1, 2007, the REACH guideline for the handling of chemical substances went into effect. It stipulates that all substances have to be registered with and evaluated and authorized by a central agency. Although Angst+Pfister neither manufactures nor processes chemicals, the group instituted measures early on to ensure rapid compliance with the REACH requirements.

REACH is an abbreviation for registration, evaluation and authorization of chemicals. According to estimates, there are more than 100,000 different chemical substances in circulation throughout Europe, of which approximately 1.5% have hazardous properties and should be subjected to restrictions or even an outright ban. The aim of REACH is to register all chemicals within the European Union (EU) and to evaluate their potential danger to humans and the environment while reversing the onus of proof: in the future, a substance and its utilization applications will only be deemed legal if they have been explicitly approved beforehand.

REACH – a directive with many effects

The aim of the directive is to protect the environment and health more effectively by regulating or prohibiting highly hazardous substances. The intention is

also to encourage industry to develop harmless alternative substances. But that is not the only goal being pursued with REACH. The pooling of data on chemical substances helps to enhance the competitiveness of the European chemical industry by allowing it to gain access to the wealth of experience of other companies and users. This will render overlapping testing of identical substances unnecessary in the future, because in order to register a substance, companies must submit the findings of toxicological and ecotoxicological tests as well as studies on how the substance behaves in the environment. Last but not least, the new transparency is also geared toward reducing the number of chemical experiments carried out on animals.



Angst+Pfister cares about a clean environment

ECHA – centralized documentation of all substances

The REACH directive follows the principle of self-responsibility in industry. In a first step, the compilation of data will give government authorities and businesses an overview of the chemical substances that are currently available on the European market. The pre-registration phase commenced on June 1, 2008 and runs until December 1, 2008. All substances manufactured or imported into the EU by a company in a volume exceeding one ton per year are affected by REACH. All substances and their potential utilization applications will be documented in the central registry of the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) in Helsinki.



REACH regulates the use of chemicals.

Angst+Pfister – an intermediary with a sense of responsibility

As a leading supplier of industrial components and services, the Angst+Pfister Group recognizes its role as a responsible intermediary. We informed our customers very early on about the internal actions that we have taken with regard to REACH and set up an internal task force to address this issue, even though a trading company does not have to register or pre-register any chemicals itself. As an integral link in the industrial supply chain, we spoke directly with our suppliers to develop a joint plan of action for the effective implementation of REACH. This stipulates, among other things, that all of our suppliers have to honor their obligation to register chemicals as fast as possible. In addition, Angst+Pfister makes sure that all information about the end-use of chemical substances is forwarded to our suppliers, which is very important for the final registration with the ECHA. All of these measures ensure that Angst+Pfister customers will not be inconvenienced by a potential failure of a substance to be registered.

Together into the future

Angst+Pfister has set the course for implementing REACH. The new EU chemicals directive will make sure that hazardous substances will be subjected to regulation before rather than after they are dispersed into the environment. Angst+Pfister is thus acting in concert with its suppliers and trade partners to implement REACH as fast as possible! After all, keeping our biosphere as free from poisons as possible is a matter that concerns us all.

Further information about REACH can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/reach/index_en.htm

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