



# Use chemicals? Use them safely!

## SAFETY DATA SHEETS AND EXPOSURE SCENARIOS

### WHAT WORKERS NEED TO KNOW AND DO

**If your company is using hazardous substances registered under REACH, you may soon see new, extended safety data sheets. This is one of the main innovations of REACH, to enable you and other workers to use these substances safely.**

#### WHAT IS NEW IN THE EXTENDED SAFETY DATA SHEETS?

The extended safety data sheets include an annex with exposure scenarios. Exposure scenarios contain practical advice on the conditions under which the chemicals can be used safely, including the necessary risk management and waste management measures. This information comes from the chemical safety assessment that was carried out under REACH for all the uses in the life cycle of the substance.

#### HOW THE NEW RULES WILL BENEFIT YOU?

The new rules will help to protect your health and the environment. The additional information in the exposure scenarios can be used to enhance the safe use of chemicals, reduce exposure to hazardous chemicals and avoid occupational diseases. The new rules introduced by REACH complement the existing health and safety legislation.

#### WHY DO YOU NEED TO TAKE ACTION?

It is important for your health. If your company fails to comply with REACH, it may have a significant impact on you, as you may not be using the chemicals safely.

#### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Show this leaflet to your employers to make sure they know what they should do when they receive extended safety data sheets. As you are exposed to the chemicals in your company, you are well placed to help your employer fulfil their legal duties.

Make sure that you and other workers in your company understand and apply the measures based on the extended safety data sheets. If you have difficulties in doing so, ask your employers to provide training. This is an obligation under the worker protection law.



## WHAT DOES YOUR COMPANY NEED TO DO?

When your company receives an extended safety data sheet, your employer should take several steps. Make sure that your safety manager is aware of them.

**Step 1:** Check whether **the uses** your company makes of the chemical are covered in section 1.2 of the safety data sheet and in the exposure scenario.

**Step 2:** If your uses are covered, compare the **conditions of safe use** described in the exposure scenario with the actual conditions of use in your company.

**If there is a mismatch in step 1 or 2, your company must take action, by choosing one of these five options**

## WHERE CAN I FIND FURTHER INFORMATION AND SUPPORT?

ETUC offers dedicated REACH web pages: <http://www.etuc.org/r/830>

ECHA provides guidance, IT tools and manuals: <http://echa.europa.eu/downstream> as well as data on all registered substances: <http://echa.europa.eu/registered-substances>

National REACH helpdesks offer practical advice in local languages: <http://www.echa.europa.eu/nationalhelp/>

EU-OSHA provides information on how to manage the risks of using dangerous substances at work: <http://osha.europa.eu/topics/ds>

The EU-funded Substitution Support portal is a source for information on alternative substances and technologies: <http://subsport.eu>

## WHAT ARE THE FIVE OPTIONS FOR YOUR COMPANY?

### **Option 1: Ask the supplier to include your use in their safety data sheet**

They should provide your company with a revised exposure scenario for your use. Your employer needs to give sufficient information on your uses and the conditions of use available to the suppliers to enable them to make the assessment.

### **Option 2: Adapt your company's activity** to the conditions of use described in the exposure scenarios, namely:

- Implementing the prescribed conditions of safe use,
- Adapting the composition/design of your product, and
- Recommending the relevant conditions of safe use to your customers.

### **Option 3: Look for another supplier**

who can provide an exposure scenario covering your use and conditions of safe use.

### **Option 4: Look for an alternative technical solution**

and stop the use of the substance in question.

### **Option 5: Carry out a chemical safety assessment**

First, check whether an exemption applies. If not, your company needs to prepare its own chemical safety report for uses and conditions of safe use. They will have to keep the chemical safety report up-to-date and available for inspection by the national authorities on request.

