

News Alert:

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PUBLIC CONSULTATION: HARMONISED CLASSIFICATION AND LABELLING OF THREE CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES

Today, the European Chemicals Agency has published on its website a public consultation on the proposal to harmonise the classification and labelling of three chemical substances. Comments are welcome on the proposal until 3 of March 2010. All comments will be taken into account in the subsequent decision-making process.

The proposals in this consultation, submitted by Denmark and United Kingdom, are:

- **White spirits** (Denmark)
 - Stoddard solvent (USA term for white spirit, which corresponds to white spirit type 1)
 - Naphtha (petroleum), hydrodesulphurized heavy (White spirit type 1)
 - Naphtha (petroleum), solvent-refined heavy (White spirit type 2)
 - Naphtha (petroleum), hydrotreated heavy (White spirit type 3)
 - Solvent naphtha (petroleum), medium aliphatic (White spirit type 0)

Proposal: Denmark proposes changes to the current harmonised classification by adding classification as harmful ('Harmful: danger of serious damage to health by prolonged exposure through inhalation').

Uses: White spirits are used mainly as solvents, e.g. in extraction, cleaning and degreasing in many applications (e.g. as wood preservatives, asphalt products, lacquers and varnishes, corrosion inhibitors, biocides and pesticides).

- **Fuberidazole** (United Kingdom)

Proposal: UK proposes changes to the current harmonised classification by adding classification as sensitising ('May cause sensitisation by skin contact') and harmful ('Harmful: danger of serious damage to health by prolonged exposure if swallowed').

Uses: Fuberidazole is a fungicide mainly used in agricultural seed treatment.
- **Thiacloprid** (United Kingdom)

Proposal: Thiacloprid has currently no harmonised classification and the UK proposes to classify it as 'Toxic if swallowed' and 'Harmful by inhalation', and for carcinogenicity in category 3 as there is 'Limited evidence of a carcinogenic effect' and for reproductive toxicity as category 3 because of 'Possible risk of impaired fertility'. For effects on the

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environment, UK proposes classification as 'Very toxic to aquatic organisms, may cause long-term adverse effects in the aquatic environment'.

Uses: Thiacloprid is an insecticide targeted chiefly to control plant lice in orchards and vegetables.

The Danish and UK authorities have submitted to ECHA dossiers on these substances and asked for their classification and labelling to be harmonised across the European Union.

Notes to Editors

ECHA

The European Chemicals Agency in Helsinki, Finland, manages the REACH Regulation and the recently adopted Classification, Labelling and Packaging Regulation. Together, they form the foundation for ECHA – with the aim of protecting human health and the environment, and ensuring the competitiveness of European industry. An important means to achieving this goal is to provide information which ensures the safe use of chemicals.

Why harmonise?

Suppliers of chemicals (substances and mixtures) across Europe have a legal obligation to evaluate the hazards of chemicals and to classify and label them in an appropriate way before placing them on the market.

However, individual EU Member States (via their competent authorities) or industry may ask for the classification and labelling of a substance to be harmonised across Europe. This may happen in three situations:

- Where the substance is either:
 - carcinogenic;
 - mutagenic;
 - toxic for reproduction; and/or
 - a respiratory sensitizer.
- When the substance is a biocide or pesticide (designed to control harmful organisms) or
- When there is a need to harmonise the classification at EU level, other hazard classes than those listed above may be proposed, for example when the suppliers classify the same substance in a different or an incorrect way.

Procedure

The proposal for harmonisation is submitted to ECHA along with a dossier which outlines the scientific reasons for making the request. ECHA receives these proposals and, together with its Committee for Risk Assessment, ensures that the dossier is complete and consistent. It then organises a public consultation. You will find details of all the current proposals for consultation on our website.

The consultation period lasts for 45 days, and, at the end of it, ECHA forwards all comments received to the Member State or industry who had submitted the proposal, so that they can provide their responses.

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The proposal, the comments and the responses will then be forwarded to ECHA's Committee for Risk Assessment which consists of scientific experts from all the EU and EEA Member States and observers from stakeholder organisations. The Committee will issue a scientific opinion on the proposal which ECHA will forward to the European Commission. The Commission then decides, on the basis of the advice from a regulatory committee of the EU Member States, on the classification and labelling of the substance concerned.

Publication of result

If the proposal to harmonise is accepted, the substance will be added to the list of harmonised classifications in Annex VI, part 3 of the CLP Regulation.

The harmonised classifications will also be made available on ECHA's website.

Thereafter, all manufacturers, importers and users of the substance in the EU will need to abide by the new harmonised classification and labelling, enabling the ultimate users to be better informed about the substance, its potential effects and how best to make use of it safely.

For media questions, please contact press@echa.europa.eu

Further Information

The public consultation on the proposals for harmonised classification & labelling can be accessed at:

http://echa.europa.eu/consultations/harmonised_cl_en.asp

Information about the new EU regulation on classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures, the so called CLP Regulation is available at:

http://echa.europa.eu/classification_en.asp

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