

REACH and its application in the paint and surface treatment sector

The downstream distributors and users do not need to register any substances, unless they import them directly into third countries without an Only Representative. What matters for REACH is the cooperation and the exchange of information, shared between the suppliers and the customers.



The new European regulation concerns the manufacturers or importers of chemicals, compounds of chemicals (preparations) or articles, containing "substances, associated with especially high risk", or releasing such substances upon their use.

Concepció Roca

REACH is the new regulation of the European Union, providing for the chemical products and their safe use. It is designed for the purposes of Registration, Evaluation, Authorization and Restriction of Chemicals. REACH supersedes the numerous regulations of the European Union, relating to the chemical products, and is supplemented by other legislative regulations, concerning the environment and the safety; however, it does not supersede the industry-specific legislation (governing, for example, cosmetics and detergents). Although REACH is a legislative reform, undertaken within the European Union, within the cur-

rent context of globalization it has a global-scale effect.

The provisions of REACH relate to the manufacturers and importers of chemicals, their compounds (preparations) or products, containing any of the components, included in the list of "substances, whose use is associated with high risk" or such, which are released upon their use (for example, the ink or toner cartridges are products, containing chemicals "released upon their use").

Or, the registration, made on the basis of a single central database, is mandatory for the substances, which are manufactured or imported, when their quantity exceeds a ton per manufacturer or importer per year. The regis-

tration includes, along with the other requirements, a technical report, containing the data of the mandatory tests. The required information increases, based on the limits of 10, 100 and 1000 tons per year, provided that the purpose and the manner of supply of the substance are also taken in account.

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registered (excluding the intermediates), and between 5 and 10% thereof shall be evaluated and, probably, authorized, since they are potentially hazardous. Furthermore, it will be necessary to substitute some of the most hazardous substances for others, which are less risky.

Which are the particular steps within this process?

The website of the recently-established European Chemicals Agency (ECHA), seated in Helsinki, provides a series of recommendations for the companies. The first of them is to appoint a specialist, who shall be in charge of the compliance with the REACH regulation, whereafter

they shall make an inventory of all chemicals, on their own or components of preparations or articles, imported, processed or distributed by the company. For each single substance and for each one of its uses, there shall be indicated the role of the company pursuant to the REACH system.

-Manufacturer or importer: a company, manufacturing or importing at least one ton per year of a given substance, on its own or in the form of a preparation.

-Manufacturer, importer or supplier of articles: a company, manufacturing, importing or realizing on the market articles, containing chemicals, released upon their use or associated with the presence of high risk.

José Luis Diloy/ President of EUROSURFAS Fair

The President of the Organizing Committee of the International Paint and Surface Treatment Exhibition expresses his firm belief that the companies in a possession of products, which will add colour to their image, will visit Eurosurf.

'At a moment when the market is experiencing some difficulties, it will be interesting to visit Eurosurf'



In what context will the present edition of Eurosurf take place?

The paint industry is undergoing a crisis, which is mostly due to the lowering of construction rate, on the one hand and the weak positions of the transport sector on the other. To this we can add the competition with countries such as China and India, and the delocalization process.

Where does this difficult situation lead us?

The consequences of this slowing down started to become obvious only recently. In 2007 the figure reflecting the production rate as compared to the previous year, was constant at about 1.100.000 tones, 680.000 of it comprise furnishing products, the rest are products for industrial painting. In economic rates, production continues to be around 1.900 billion euro per year.

How can this situation affect the Eurosurf event?

Such period of market stagnation is the most suitable time to take part in a fair such as Eurosurf, because this is the place, where all companies in need of painting something will be gathered together. Now is the time to

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How many participants are expected?

We estimated that this year the figure will go over 56.000 people, which was the number of the visitors at the last exhibition. Moreover, the problem with the access to the fair venue is completely solved and the exhibition hall is excellently equipped, which

ensures its perfect operation - something we witnessed at the Construmat exhibition, which was held recently. Also we expect a great movement between visitors of Eurosurf, Equiplast and Expoquimia.

What do I mean?

I mean that many of the people who visit the other two exhibitions, would like to look at Eurosurf as well, in order to kill two birds with one stone, as the saying goes. This is so, because, on the one hand, those who work in the plastic or chemical products branch are usually interested in finishing works on different surfaces. On the other hand, everything which is manufac-

tured nowadays needs to be painted. Moreover, various congresses and events will be held, which are of interest to the whole industry.

Like what?

We foresee a congress on REACH regulation, for which event we have attracted some representatives of the Administration to explain before the branch representatives what exactly the new legislative framework encompasses and what measures need to be taken, so that the manufacturers can adapt to it. Also Eurocar and Days of the Environment Congress will be held.

What new will be presented at the Exhibition?

The visitors will be able to see the newest products in the field of water and powdered paints, which do not contain solvents with harmful impact on the environment. The branch agreed to renew its products and carry out research in the new methods for carrying out of finishing works on surfaces.

Statutory acts such as the European regulation REACH and the necessity to take a responsibility for environmental protection prompted us to create new products.

Finally, what needs to be done by this industry branch in order to overcome the above mentioned situation?

One of the problems is that this branch is a bit scattered. There are over 500 manufacturers, while in Germany they are not more than the modest 60. Mergers are necessary, so that the companies can better overcome the unfavourable period which has set in. On the other hand, we need to go beyond the borders of this country. In South America, for example a growing demand for Spanish companies has been observed. In this zone, where a considerable economic growth is registered, we even have an advantage, which stems from the use of the same language.