

ECHA/PR/12/03

ECHA publishes information on consumer articles containing Substances of Very High Concern (SVHCs)

Helsinki, 5 March 2012 – For the first time, ECHA is publishing information on articles on the EU market that contain SVHCs included on the Candidate List. The data gathered is based on information provided by companies to ECHA in notification and registration dossiers.

The majority of notifications received so far relate to four phthalates that are on the Candidate List due to their toxicity to reproduction. These can typically be found in plastic articles. Examples of such notified articles are cables, bags, packaging material, waterproof garments and PVC flooring. The second most common notification is for the brominated flame retardant (HBCDD), which is persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic. This substance can be found in articles used by the construction and building sectors such as plastic panels for the thermal insulation of buildings. It has also been notified in polystyrene foam used for packaging and in the plastic housing of electronic appliances.

This does not mean that all articles of these types contain the substance, just that they may. Similarly, not finding an article in the list does not mean that it does not contain an SVHC.

ECHA is providing this information to add to the general increase in knowledge on the use and presence of hazardous substances in consumer articles. It is also to remind importers and producers of their legal obligations, under certain conditions, to notify when their articles contain substances on the Candidate List. Finally, consumers are reminded that they have the right to know when substances on the Candidate List are present in articles that they want to buy. They have the right to ask the retailer this and to receive an answer within 45 days.

From April to December 2011, the Agency received only 203 notifications. This is a new obligation for producers and importers of articles and many may yet be unaware of their responsibility to notify. Consequently, the information does not provide a full picture of substances of very high concern in articles on the EU market. Companies are therefore encouraged to check that they have implemented their legal obligations in this regard.

The deadline for producers and importers of articles to notify ECHA of the presence in articles of the 20 SVHCs that were included in the Candidate List in December 2011 is in June 2012.

The data is available on the ECHA website and is updated every six months.

Further information

Data on Candidate List substances in articles:

<http://echa.europa.eu/information-on-chemicals/candidate-list-substances-in-articles>

The Candidate List:

<http://echa.europa.eu/addressing-chemicals-of-concern/authorisation/substances-of-very-high-concern-identification/candidate-list-of-substances-of-very-high-concern-for-authorisation>

Notification of Candidate List substances in articles:

<http://echa.europa.eu/en/regulations/reach/candidate-list-substances-in-articles/notification-of-substances-in-articles>

