



What **REACH** means for users of chemicals

Think you don't use chemicals in your business? Take another look. You may find that you do use chemicals even if you don't realise it. Keeping your machinery running or cleaning your premises uses chemicals.

This leaflet provides basic information to help you understand how you as a chemical user could be affected by **REACH**.

REACH
UK Competent Authority

What is REACH?


REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals) is the new system for controlling chemicals in Europe. It became law in the UK on 1 June 2007. You need to understand the ways it might affect you.

Do you use chemicals in your business?

Most businesses use chemicals and many rely on them without realising it. For example you may use them in the manufacture of finished goods or simply to keep your machinery operating and your premises clean. Examples include paints, metals, glues, solvents and cleaning materials.

What will happen to chemicals under REACH?

Chemicals that are manufactured or imported into the EU will need to be registered with the new European Chemical Agency (ECHA) in Helsinki. The process starts with pre-registration next year and will be phased in over a period of years.



As a user, REACH may make things better for you as it's designed to provide more information on chemicals and increase confidence in their safe use. In particular, better information on the hazards of chemicals and how to use them safely will be passed down the supply chain by chemical manufacturers and importers through improved Safety Data Sheets. Unless you make or import chemicals yourself, as a user it is highly unlikely that you will need to register chemicals. If you do make or import chemicals then you should read information leaflets numbers 2 and 3 in this series for more information on what you might need to do under REACH.

What do I need to do?

Ask yourself what you do in your business and where chemicals might be used? For example, if you make anything from formulations (eg paints, coatings) through to objects for sale then the chances are you use chemicals in some form. Generally, if you are using chemicals or mixtures of them (eg paint, lubricants, cleaning agents) in the way that is expected then REACH probably won't mean significant changes for you.

If your business relies on using unusual chemicals (that aren't very common) you may need to be sure that these will still be available in the future. You should consider contacting your supplier to find out if the chemical(s) in question will be registered by whoever makes or imports it. It is possible that some companies, for example for

business reasons, may decide not to register chemicals. If so, then you may need to find an alternative source or even re-think your processes. You really need to be thinking about this **now** to avoid any problems next year.

If you use a chemical in a novel way that is perhaps not expected then you will need to consider letting your supplier know. This use will need to be considered for registration by the supplier. If you don't want to let your supplier know about this use (for example because of commercial concerns) then you don't have to **but** it will mean that you will have to let the ECHA know about this use and possibly have to submit your own risk assessment.

Will it affect your business?

What should you do now?

DON'T PANIC!

Think about the advice given in this leaflet and work out where you might fit in as a user of chemicals. There is plenty of help and information available including the UK REACH Competent Authority website. There you will find more information on REACH and links to other sources of help and advice. The Competent Authority website can be found at:

www.hse.gov.uk/reach

Visit the European Chemicals Agency website for more detailed information and to access a useful tool called Navigator which will help you work out where your chemicals fall within REACH. That can be found at:

http://reach.jrc.it/navigator_en.htm



**WHATEVER YOUR BUSINESS IS,
FIND OUT MORE TODAY –
don't leave it until it's too late!**

UK REACH Competent Authority Information Leaflet 4 - August 2007
What REACH means for chemical manufacturers