

# REACH and Safety Data Sheets

**This leaflet explains the requirements for safety data sheets and how they will change in the future.**

## What is REACH?

REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and restriction of Chemicals) is the system for controlling chemicals in Europe. It became law in the UK on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2007. REACH adopts some of the older aspects of the chemicals system in Europe, including Safety Data Sheets (SDS).

Manufacturers, importers, downstream users and distributors supplying substances or mixtures meeting the criteria for classification as dangerous have previously, under the Chemicals (Hazard Information and Packaging for Supply) Regulations (CHIP) 2002, been required to compile and supply a SDS at the first delivery of a substance or mixture.

REACH has now taken over this system and introduced some changes which are detailed below.

## Do you need to provide a SDS?

**You need to provide a SDS if:**

1. You supply a **substance** or a **mixture** (see definitions section below) that is either:
  - (a) classified as dangerous under Dangerous Substances Directive 67/548/EEC or Dangerous Preparations Directive, 1999/45/EC; or
  - (b) persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic (PBT), or very persistent and very bioaccumulative (vPvB) as defined in Annex XIII of REACH; or
  - (c) included in the [European Chemicals Agency's 'Candidate List'](#) of substances of very high concern (SVHC see 'definitions section below) for reasons other than (a) and (b) given here.
2. You are a supplier and your customer requests a SDS for a mixture that is not classified as dangerous under Directive 1999/45/EC, but contains either:
  - (a) a substance posing human health or environmental hazards in an individual concentration of  $\geq 1\%$  by weight for non-gaseous mixtures or  $\geq 0.2\%$  by volume for gaseous mixtures; or
  - (b) a substance that is persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic, or very persistent and very bioaccumulative as defined in Annex XIII of REACH in an individual concentration of  $\geq 0.1\%$  by weight for non-gaseous mixtures; or
  - (c) a substance on the 'Candidate List' of substances of very high concern (for reasons other than those listed above), in an individual concentration of  $\geq 0.1\%$  by weight for non-gaseous mixtures; or
  - (d) a substance for which there are Europe-wide workplace exposure limits, e.g. a substance that has indicative occupational exposure limit value (IOELV).
3. Although not required by REACH, if you are a supplier to EU countries other than the UK, then you may need to supply a SDS for mixtures that are not classified as dangerous but that contain substances with national workplace exposure limit values in other EU countries. (You would need to approach individual Member States for this information.)

**You do not need to provide a SDS:**

1. If you offer or sell dangerous substances or mixtures to the general public and you provide sufficient information to enable users to take the necessary measures as regards safety and the protection of human health and the environment, unless a SDS is requested by a downstream user or distributor.
2. If the substances/mixtures are supplied in the UK and not classified as dangerous.

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3. For certain products intended for the final user, e.g. medicinal products or cosmetics.

## What information needs to be provided on a SDS?

The safety data sheet shall be dated and shall contain the following headings:

1. Identification of the substance/mixture and of the company/undertaking;
2. Hazards identification;
3. Composition/information on ingredients;
4. First-aid measures;
5. Fire-fighting measures;
6. Accidental release measures;
7. Handling and storage;
8. Exposure controls/personal protection;
9. Physical and chemical properties;
10. Stability and reactivity;
11. Toxicological information;
12. Ecological information;
13. Disposal considerations;
14. Transport information;
15. Regulatory information;
16. Other information.

Guidance on how to compile a SDS is detailed in Annex II of [REACH](#).

REACH has introduced a few changes to the information required in a SDS. The **main ones** are:

- Headings 2 and 3 swap around
- An email contact address should be included in section 1, for competent person(s) able to respond with appropriate advice.
- A SDS should be supplied in an official language of the Member State(s) where the substance or mixture is placed on the market (unless the relevant Competent Authority in the Member State(s) concerned has indicated otherwise).

In addition, SDS for substances or mixtures containing substances that have been fully registered under REACH will require:

- Inclusion of registration numbers where appropriate (see also section on confidentiality provisions).
- Inclusion of exposure scenarios including any risk management measures, where required, in an Annex to the SDS. The information in the SDS should be consistent with the information in any chemical safety assessment (CSA) for that substance, or a mixture if a CSA for the mixture is available.

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## How and when should a SDS be provided?

A SDS should be provided to the recipient free of charge on paper or electronically, e.g. by postal delivery, fax or email. A system that merely requires customers to download a SDS from a company's website or form a catalogue of SDS is not considered appropriate. A SDS should be provided either before or at the time of first delivery of the substance or mixture.

Where a customer re-orders substances or mixtures, then the supplier only has to provide the SDS once (provided the sheet contents have not changed).

## When should an SDS be updated?

The SDS needs to be updated:

1. As soon as new hazard information or information that may affect the risk management measures becomes available; or
2. Once an Authorisation under REACH is granted or refused; or
3. Once a restriction under REACH has been imposed.

The new dated version of the SDS, identified as 'Revision: date' shall be supplied to all customers (of the substance/mixture in question) from the preceding 12 months.

## Confidentiality provisions

As a substance's registration number and the registrant's identity may be made publicly available on the internet, some suppliers may be concerned that this will allow their customers to bypass them in the supply chain.

A registrant can request for this information to be withheld from the internet (as long as this can be justified), so suppliers of SDS may wish to discuss this issue with the registrant(s) in their supply chain(s).

## Enforcement

The SDS requirements in REACH became law on 1st June 2007. This means the changes detailed in this leaflet under 'What information needs to be provided on a SDS?' should already be implemented now. However, as the requirements for SDS in REACH are similar to those they replace, enforcement of these new requirements in the UK is currently pragmatic. New prints of SDS should conform to the new standards.

If new information on hazards or risk management measures becomes available, the SDS should be updated without delay and the new format should be used. In addition, if new information has been generated from the registration process (including the production of exposure scenarios) the SDS should again be updated without delay in the new format. In other cases, suppliers should seek to update their SDS as soon as is practicable.

## Future of SDS

There is a new Regulation regarding the classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures, the "CLP Regulation" ([Regulation \(EC\) No 1272/2008](#)). The Regulation will be the means by which the United Nations' Globally Harmonised System (GHS) of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals will be implemented in the EU. This Regulation will change the way in which hazard classification and labelling is expressed and will in turn lead to further changes to SDS. If a substance or mixture is classified in accordance with the CLP Regulation before 1<sup>st</sup> December 2010 then that classification may be provided in the SDS along with the classification in accordance with either Directive 67/548/EEC or 1999/45/EC.

More information is available at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/ghs/eureg.htm>.

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## Definitions

**Authorisation** means an allowed use of a substance of very high concern (SVHC) that has been listed in Annex XIV of REACH (list to be established by 1 June 2009 by the European Chemicals Agency). Under REACH, manufacturers, importers or downstream users will not normally be able to place such substances on the market for use (which includes importing them), or use them themselves, without authorisation.

**Chemical Safety Assessment** is part of the REACH registration package and is an assessment of a substance's hazards, uses and recommended risk reduction methods.

**Exposure scenario** means the set of conditions, including operational conditions and risk management measures, that describe how the substance is manufactured or used during its life-cycle and how the manufacturer or importer controls, or recommends downstream users to control, exposures of humans and the environment. These exposure scenarios may cover one specific process or use or several processes or uses as appropriate.

**Mixture** means a mixture or solution composed of two or more substances.

**Restriction** means any condition for or prohibition of the manufacture, use or placing on the market under REACH.

**Substance** means a chemical element and its compounds in the natural state or obtained by any manufacturing process, including any additive necessary to preserve stability and any impurity deriving from the process used, but excluding any solvent which may be separated without affecting the stability of the substance or changing its composition.

**SVHC** ('substances of very high concern') are substances that have hazards with serious consequences for human health or the environment, e.g. they have the potential to cause cancer, or they remain in the environment for a long time with their amounts in animals gradually building up. [The 'candidate list' of SVHC](#) is published on the website of the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) at

## Further information

For advice on the application of REACH obligations, you can contact the UK REACH Competent Authority's national helpdesk:

Email: [UKREACHCA@hse.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:UKREACHCA@hse.gsi.gov.uk)

Website: [www.hse.gov.uk/reach](http://www.hse.gov.uk/reach)

