

REACH is Here

What is REACH?

REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and restriction of Chemicals) is important EU legislation on chemicals that you need to know about. It is the system for controlling chemicals in Europe, and became law in the UK on 1st June 2007.

Will it affect your business?

REACH will impact on almost all UK business sectors. From retailers to builders, food manufacturers to printers – most businesses use some form of chemicals in their day-to-day operations. This leaflet will tell you where you fit into REACH and what you need to do next.

How might REACH affect you?

Even businesses that wouldn't normally think of themselves as being involved with chemicals can be affected by REACH. Many businesses rely on chemicals in some way without realising it. If you answer 'YES' to any of the following questions, you need to find out more about REACH and what it means.

Do you make chemicals?

If you make chemicals, either to use yourself or to supply to other people (even if it's for export), then it's likely that you will have some important responsibilities under REACH. To find out more about what these might be, read [UK REACH CA Information Leaflet Number 2 – What REACH means for chemical manufacturers](#).

Do you buy anything from outside Europe?

If you import anything from outside the EU/EEA (i.e., the EU 28, plus Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein), be it individual chemicals, (e.g., pigments, polymers), mixtures for onwards sale (e.g., paints, inks, cosmetics) or finished products like clothes or plastic goods then it's quite possible that you may have some responsibilities under REACH. To find out if you are likely to be affected by REACH, read [UK REACH CA Information Leaflet Number 3 – What REACH means for EU importers](#).

Do you use chemicals in your business?

If your initial answer is no, think again. Most businesses use chemicals and many rely on them without realising it; for example, in manufacture or for keeping premises clean. Examples include paints, metals, glues, solvents, or cleaning materials.

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.

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The good news is that, if you are using widely available chemicals in ways that are quite safe, REACH probably won't mean big changes for you. You should still find out more so that you can be sure.

If your business relies on receiving specialist chemicals, or ones that aren't very common, you may need to be sure that these will still be available in the future.

If you use chemicals in your business (which you probably do) then to find out more about how REACH might affect you, read [UK REACH CA Information Leaflet Number 4 – What REACH Means for users of chemicals](#).

What does the Competent Authority (CA) do?

REACH places responsibilities on a wide range of businesses. As the regulatory body we need to make sure that these responsibilities are met but we are also here to help you.

This is the first in a series of leaflets from HSE, the Competent Authority responsible for REACH in the UK.

What should you do now?

Whatever your business is, find out more today

The leaflets mentioned here will help you work out how REACH might affect you and what you need to do next. Download the leaflets from the [UK REACH Competent Authority website](#) and get more information on REACH, including links to other source of help and advice.

The CA website can be found at: www.hse.gov.uk/reach/

