

EU member states back proposed NMP ban

Echa to prepare restriction proposals on other aprotic solvents

1 November 2017 / Alternatives assessment & substitution, Cleaning products, Europe, REACH, Substances of concern

EU member states have voted to approve a Dutch proposal to ban the manufacture, marketing and use of the aprotic solvent 1-methyl-2-pyrrolidone (NMP) if producers do not meet stringent exposure limits for workers.



The proposal, which addresses risks to workers caused by inhalation and dermal exposure to the substance, carries a two-year general deferral of the ban's application to allow stakeholders time to take necessary compliance measures.

The wire-coating industry will have a six-year deferral period because it will have to replace part of its older production lines prematurely to comply with the derived no-effect levels (Dnels).

NMP, which is suspected of being reprotoxic, is used in pH regulators, water treatment products, washing and cleaning products and laboratory chemicals.

The restriction proposal, which was approved at the REACH Committee meeting on 24 October, would be enforced unless:

registration dossiers are updated with the new Dnels relating to worker exposure of 14.4mg/m³ by inhalation and 4.8mg/kg/day dermally; and manufacturers and downstream users comply with these values in the workplace.

Twenty-four member states voted for the proposal, with two against and two abstentions. The vote concludes a long debate between Echa's Risk Assessment Committee (Rac) and the European Commission's Scientific Committee on Occupational Exposure Limits (Scoel) on the derivation of exposure limits for workers, with the Commission supporting the approach suggested by Rac.

Other restrictions

At the previous REACH committee meeting in September, some member states questioned why the restriction was proposed for one aprotic solvent and not for three others in use on the EU market – dimethyl formamide (DMF), n,n-dimethylacetamide (DMAC) and dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO).

At the October meeting, the Commission said it has asked Echa to prepare a similar restriction proposal for DMAC and DMF – for the latter, Italy also announced it is preparing to submit a restriction proposal.

The Commission must now formally adopt the NMP restriction proposal, which is likely to take place in early 2018.

NMP is also undergoing scrutiny outside of Europe. In September, Chemical Watch reported that the [US EPA¹](#) might still move ahead with a proposal to restrict the use of the substance and fellow solvent methylene chloride (dichloromethane) under section 6 of TSCA.

And in February, [Canada²](#) said NMP is not harmful as defined by section 64 of the Canadian Environmental Protection Act (Cepa), a conclusion at odds with a 2015 TSCA workplan assessment conducted by the US EPA.

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[EPA may progress proposed methylene chloride and NMP restrictions](#)³

[Canada clears NMP under draft assessments](#)⁴

Further Information:

[NMP draft text](#)⁵

[NMP draft annex](#)⁶

<https://chemicalwatch.com/58483/>

<https://chemicalwatch.com/53494/>

<https://chemicalwatch.com/58483/epa-may-progress-proposed-methylene-chloride-and-nmp-restrictions>

<https://chemicalwatch.com/53494/canada-clears-nmp-under-draft-assessments>

<http://files.chemicalwatch.com/NMP%20draft%20text.pdf>

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