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ECHA to prepare restriction proposal on chromium (VI) substances

ECHA/NR/23/26

The European Commission has requested ECHA to prepare a REACH restriction proposal on certain chromium (VI) substances currently on the Authorisation List of substances of very high concern.

Helsinki, 11 October 2023 – ECHA has received a mandate from the European Commission to prepare an Annex XV report for possible restriction of at least the chromium (VI) substances that are currently in entries 16 and 17 of the REACH Authorisation List (Annex XIV). ECHA will submit the proposal by 4 October 2024.

The restriction proposal aims to address the challenges posed by the current and possible future workload both for ECHA and the Commission. This workload stems from the high number of applications for authorisation to use these substances, already submitted or potentially coming from hundreds of companies. For ECHA, evaluating the applications and concluding opinions on them would go beyond the available resources of the committees for Risk Assessment (RAC) and Socio-Economic Analysis (SEAC) and would affect their work in regulating other hazardous chemicals.

If ECHA identifies a potential risk of regrettable substitution to other chromium (VI) substances during the preparation of the restriction proposal, an extension of the mandate to cover additional chromium (VI) substances is possible. However, this will need to be discussed and agreed with the Commission.

The preparation of the restriction proposal and its evaluation by RAC and SEAC will follow the standard REACH restrictions process. In preparing the proposal, ECHA will consider the knowledge and experience it has gained from processing applications for authorisation for these substances.

Once the Commission adopts the restriction, the substances in scope will be removed from the Authorisation List. This would mark the first time in REACH's history where such an action would be done.

Help for companies

The Commission has published a Q&A document clarifying the situation for affected companies. This document also covers the main questions concerning the judgment of the European Court of Justice annulling the authorisation of a consortium covering many chromium trioxide downstream users (Chemservice decision).

Companies dealing with chromium (VI) compounds are encouraged to consult the document for more information. If your question is not answered in the document, send it to GROW-F1@ec.europa.eu.

Background

Altogether 11 chromium (VI) substances were added to the Authorisation List in April 2013 and August 2014. They can cause cancer, genetic mutations and harm reproduction. Some of them are also skin and respiratory sensitisers.

One of the main uses for the substances covered in the restriction proposal is electroplating, which is a common surface finishing process to coat material.

FURTHER INFORMATION

[Commission's Q&A for companies](#)[Mandate to ECHA](#)[Registry of restriction intentions](#)[Judgment of the European Court of Justice, case C-144/21](#)[Authorisation List – entry 16 - chromium trioxide](#)[Authorisation List – entry 17 - chromic acid](#)



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