

## Press Release No. 45/2008

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### Pre-registration for REACH begins

#### Federal Environment Agency providing advice and support to businesses on implementation of REACH

The EU Chemicals Ordinance REACH goes into the next round as pre-registration begins. REACH requires registration of all chemicals that are on the market in the EU. Manufacturers and importers of chemicals must register products with the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) and assess the risk they pose to mankind and the environment. Pre-registration is a sort of taking of stock that provides public authorities and businesses with an overview of which substances are currently on the market in Europe. It is a non-binding demonstration of interest on the part of businesses as to which chemicals they want to continue to sell and must therefore register within the next 10 years. "Interim regulations apply upon registration when substances have been pre-registered. I advise small businesses in particular to take advantage of this", said Dr. Klaus Günter Steinhäuser, Director of Chemical Safety at the Federal Environment Agency (UBA). Pre-registration will make it easier for responsible businesses to meet their REACH obligations and gives them more time until final registration. "Anyone who fails to pre-register must register immediately. The substances will then be classed as new, regardless of how long they have already been manufactured", explained Steinhäuser. In one of its new background papers, the UBA advises chemicals manufacturers and importers to decide on the future composition of their product portfolio and to pre-register with ECHA by December of this year.

REACH requires manufacturers and importers to submit data at the time of registration on the impact of their chemicals on mankind and the environment. After pre-registration ECHA will determine which substances are being produced and imported by which companies. The aim is to motivate those organisations which manufacture or import the same chemicals to register jointly and to group similar substances together. This would avoid conducting unnecessary experiments on animals and save costs since businesses would not have to carry tests out individually. REACH provides businesses the opportunity of more flexible and efficient testing. UBA is helping businesses to focus attention on certain critical aspects and to concentrate tests on these aspects. For example, there are procedures that make predictions of certain properties, e.g. toxic effects, possible based on chemical structure of a substance.

Experimental tests can thus be designed to focus on critical aspects and devote less or no time to less critical concerns. "We do not want to just tally, we want to identify the truly critical substances and limit their distribution", said Steinhäuser.

The UBA, the Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, and the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment are helping businesses to comply with REACH regulations. UBA is addressing particular stumbling blocks in a longstanding research project, *REACH in der Praxis*. Together with the other authorities UBA is working on pragmatic sample solutions for small and medium-sized enterprises in particular. Information and guidance on implementing REACH is offered by the REACH helpdesk. It is the information point in Germany for manufacturers, importers and consumers of chemicals. The REACH helpdesk provides support in matters concerning registration, evaluation and authorisation of chemicals. It is comprised of a network of experts from federal authorities, [www.reach-helpdesk.de](http://www.reach-helpdesk.de).

**The background paper with information on the key points concerning pre-registration can be downloaded free of charge at [www.reach-info.de](http://www.reach-info.de).**

**The REACH information portal also contains additional materials. Businesses can pre-register online at [www.echa.europa.eu](http://www.echa.europa.eu).**

Dessau-Roßlau, 11 June 2008