

Peroxygens Sector Group

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Impact of the new classification of Hydrogen Peroxide on the EU Ecolabel criteria for newsprint paper, printed paper and copy and graphic paper

As we already informed through the Cefic Peroxygens Sector Group, Regulation 286/20111 (amending CLP Regulation 1272/2008) modifies the criteria for classification of long-term hazards to the environment. As a result hydrogen peroxide is classified as aquatic chronic category 3 for solutions containing more than 25% w/w with the hazard statement "H412: Harmful to aquatic life with long-lasting effects".

Although it does not suppress the eligibility of paper bleached with Hydrogen Peroxide to the EU Ecolabel criteria, the new classification has a certain impact on the mechanism to certify these products.

The EU Ecolabel criteria exclude or limit the use of classified substances containing certain hazard statement including the above mentioned H412 statement. However the criteria state immediately after that *substances or mixtures which change their properties upon processing (e.g., become no longer bioavailable, undergo chemical modification) so that the identified hazard no longer applies*, are exempted from the above requirement.

During the manufacture of paper, under normal operating conditions Hydrogen Peroxide decomposes and should not be present in the final paper. However, as stated in the Commission Decisions defining the EU Ecolabel criteria, it is the responsibility of the manufacturer of the finished product to verify that the above mentioned conditions are met:

"Assessment and verification: the applicant shall prove compliance with these criteria by providing data on the amount (kg/ADT paper produced) of substances used in the process and by demonstrating that the substances referred to in these criteria are not retained in the final product above the concentration limits specified. The concentration for substances and mixtures shall be specified in the Safety Data Sheets in accordance with Article 31 of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006."

A direct implication of this new situation is that manufacturers of Hydrogen Peroxide will not be in a position anymore to give any certificate of compliance of hydrogen peroxide with the EU Ecolabel criteria.

For more information, do not hesitate to contact the secretariat of the Cefic Peroxygens Sector Group or your Hydrogen Peroxide supplier.

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On behalf of the members of H₂O₂ sub-group



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