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TBBPA Environment Risk Assessment closed

EU Member States Technical Experts met on 6 March to discuss for the last time the environmental risk assessment of TBBPA. No risk was identified for TBBPA when used as a reactive, such as in the epoxy resins of printed circuit boards. Technical experts confirmed a risk for sediment and water when TBBPA is added to ABS plastics.

EBFRIP believes that these risks are manageable through the Voluntary Emissions Control Action Programme (VECAP) (2). To date 89% in volume of TBBPA additive customers in Europe have already started reducing their emissions. It should be noted that risks were also identified if sludge containing TBBPA is applied to agriculture. In practice, however, this does not happen as sludge from user sites is sent to incineration and controlled landfills.

The lead Member State (UK) will now finalise the environmental part of the report based on the 6 March discussions. The health part was already closed in 2005 and identified no risk. EBFRIP is working with the lead Member State, which is drafting a strategy, to reduce the risks identified for the above mentioned additive scenarios.

In the context of the REACH legislation, TBBPA will be one of the first substances to go through the registration procedure due to its high production volume. All the necessary studies for REACH registration were already developed in the context of the EU risk assessment.

(1) TBBPA is used to comply with global fire safety requirements mainly as a reactive chemical in epoxy resins of printed circuit board laminates (such as FR4, CM-1 and CM-3) and as an additive to ABS plastics

(2) Established by the brominated flame retardant industry, VECAP was set up to manage, monitor and minimise industrial emissions of commercially available brominated flame retardants into the environment through partnership with the supply chain including Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs). Developed for Deca-BDE it is now being applied to the main other high production volume brominated flame retardants, TBBPA and HBCD. For a copy of the first VECAP Annual Progress Report, click on:
http://www.bsef.com/newsmanager/uploads/2006_vecap_annual_progress_report.pdf