

EFCC Position on ECHA Public Consultation about restriction of D4/D5/D6

EFCC, based in Brussels, is the European Federation for Construction Chemicals and since 2007 is the European Association representing, directly or indirectly, more than 130 Companies in the Construction Chemicals sector.

Construction Chemicals deals with all those chemicals and all related applications which find utilization in the Construction Industry, from admixtures for concrete, to mortar systems, to flooring applications, to sealants & adhesives, to waterproofing systems, to anticorrosion agents and many other additives & solutions aimed at improving performances, durability, energy efficiency and overall sustainability in the Construction applications.

The global Construction Chemicals market size is valued at approx. 40 billion Euro and the European market of Construction Chemicals is the second largest one with a value of approx. 10 billion Euro

Introduction

Silicones are largely used in the European Construction sector : out of all industries, Construction represents the first (in volumes) most involved industry in the use of Silicones and the second one in value, with a turnover higher than 600 million Euro.

Silicones are key, indispensable materials in Construction and they are used as sealants, adhesives, building insulation, protective coatings for exterior surfaces.

Silicones are strongly energy-efficient and show low carbon footprint if compared with other chemicals used for similar applications.

Background

In January 2019, ECHA submitted a proposal for a new Reach Annex XV restriction on D4/D5/D6 in leave-on products and other consumer/professional products. Silicone polymers used in the Construction Chemicals Industry might be affected by this proposal.

EFCC Position

- Large majority of potential releases of D4/D5/D6 to environment is related to the use of wash-off products and the existing restriction on wash-off products has already proved to be effective in drastically reducing the emissions of D4/D5/D6. Such a reducing trend is expected to continue following the deadline of the wash-off restriction (January 2020). The actual result of this regulatory action should be well monitored and taken into account before considering any new restriction. Therefore, any further Reach restriction for D4/D5/D6 before a new risk assessment would be disproportionate and unjustified.

- D4/D5/D6 are key building blocks for Silicone production. They might remain just as an impurity in the Silicone polymers used by Construction Chemicals Industry as raw material for further formulation of finished products
- No intentional use or addition of D4/D5/D6 is present in the Construction Chemicals industry, which acts as downstream user of the Silicone polymers
- Some polymers used in the Construction industry might have a residual content of D4/D5/D6 as impurity close/higher than the proposed limit of 0.1%. However, also following the request of downstream users, the manufacturers of Silicone polymers are already reducing the impurity level below 0.1%
- The Commission's requests excludes the industrial uses of D4/D5/D6 from the Annex XV investigation (such as formulation of mixtures containing Silicone polymers and production of Silicone polymers). Given the above statement in the ECHA Dossier, EFCC requests that, in case of any further restriction, such a restriction clearly states that **1)**it would be for Consumer or Professional uses and that Polymers and Industrial uses are out of scope ; **2)**any discussion of derogations for Polymers which contain unintentional residual impurities of D4/D5/D6 should be removed as they are out of scope.