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Passionate about solvents

ESIG promotes sustainable and responsible use of solvents



The European Solvents Industry Group (ESIG) represents European producers of oxygenated and hydrocarbon solvents, big multinationals as well as SME. Our mission is to promote compliance with legislation and the sustainable, safe and responsible use of solvents along the value-added chain by developing and sharing information and best practices.

These topics are addressed via ESIG's three working programs on product stewardship, communications and advocacy and in close cooperation with downstream users in an industry forum called ESVOC. The forum brings together 25 user associations from different segments to collaborate on air quality and health, safety and environmental (HSE) issues including REACH.

Solvents exceed HSE requirements

ESIG was founded in 1996, when the solvents' industry was in the focus of far-reaching air quality regulations and subject to many negative headlines in well-known journals across Europe. Many prejudices against solvents that are perceivable still today originate from that time. However, the industry has learned its lesson and has entirely changed over the past 15 years, dedicating substantial efforts and funds to not only comply with, but even exceed the EU's HSE requirements. Despite massive losses of markets it still significantly contributes to the social welfare in Europe: it directly employs more than 10,000 people in Europe and indirectly accounts for more than 10 million jobs, with more than 500,000 European companies using solvents in very diversified application segments. More than 80% of these companies are SME.

Building alliances, sponsoring dialogue

For more than a decade, ESIG has been the key driver in promoting the industry's efforts for responsibility, sustainability and substantial improvements in the handling of solvents by building alliances, providing comprehensive information including trainings and sponsoring the dialogue with industry partners and independent institutes to countercheck whether the industry measures were on track. The achievements are visible.

Acting proactively, offering advice

ESIG and its members have not only left it to the regulators to address health and safety concerns via restrictions of marketing and use for various solvents, but also proactively phased out several former substances of concern. Based on a profound analysis of the sources for accidents, ESIG has identified the major areas for improvement in terms of products, processes and handling. Its guidelines and communications materials related to

solvents have been helping thousands of solvent users in Europe and beyond: the "Do's and Don'ts" poster, "The Solvents Family" brochure, the DVDs on "Safe Handling of Solvents" and "Static Electricity" as well as best practice guidelines offer practical and easy-to-understand advice in up to 16 European languages. All publications can be ordered free of charge in any quantity from the ESIG secretariat (esig@cefic.be) or downloaded from the ESIG homepage www.esig.org.

ESIG Product Stewardship Award

Every 2 years the ESIG Product Stewardship Award recognizes SME that are undertaking innovative ways to minimize the impact of solvent use on the environment and health. It should also be mentioned that ESIG/ESVOC jointly, proactively pioneered and piloted the approach of REACH generic exposure scenarios for the entire chemical industry in Europe with the endorsement of ECHA.

Share in VOC emissions has decreased

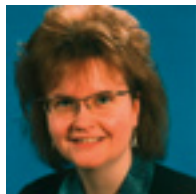
As consequence of the various EU and national regulations on ozone reduction the solvents' sector has reduced VOC emissions by more than 1.3 m tons between 1990 and 2005 in EU15 alone – a reduction of more than 30%, as official EU data show. The solvents' share in the total of man-made VOC emissions has, hence, also substantially decreased, while at the same time the proportion of biogenic VOC emissions has been continuously and tremendously rising to an actual 41% of all VOC emissions.

Studies: VOC reductions from solvents

Between 2006 and 2009 three independent institutes carried out studies on the potential for further VOC reductions from solvents, based on their own air quality models as well as actual meteorological and economic data. TNO in the Netherlands with their Lotoseuros Model, INERIS in France with their Chimère Model and Prof. Derwent in the UK with his Harwell Trajectory Model all arrived at the same conclusion: further VOC reductions from solvents will have a close-to-zero impact on ozone, just trigger off significantly negative economic impacts. Additionally, the Harwell Trajectory Model proved that the SED has been extremely effective in reducing European ozone, whereas the DecoPaints Directive has not contributed much.

As a matter of course, the solvents' industry will not rest, but continue with their efforts to make their products as environmentally friendly and safe to use as possible. In this respect there are still many challenges ahead, but ESIG is determined to face them and is constantly looking for cooperation partners. ◀

Contact: dar@cefic.be; www.esig.org



Dorothee Arns
Director General
of ESIG

„The Joy of Painting...“ , Pete D. is Happy!



www.bjoerk.de

Every painter is happy if the product he is using gives long lasting protection. High performance paint will give many more years protection than your standard paint and reduce maintenance costs dramatically. Pete D. had the choice of four environmentally friendly coatings which are based on resins from Worlée. These resins enable the paint formulator to produce high performance paints and lacquers for metal coatings.

If you have to choose a binder for metal coatings, please click www.worlee.de/metal-coatings

WorléeCryl 7158 is a water-borne styrene acrylic dispersion for base and top coats on metal which provides, after drying, a water resistant film. The solid content of nearly 50% and the MFFT from 0–5 °C allow the formulations of paints to be applied even under unfavourable weather conditions.

WorléeSol E 330 W is a short oil PU modified alkyd emulsion for air-drying water thinnable anti corrosion primers and top coats. The solid content of 42% and the pH-value from 7.5–8.5 make an easy formulation without neutralisation. Because of the fast physical drying, dryers are not always necessary. Paint based on this resin can be used even at 3–5 °C.

WorléeCryl A 2241 W is a water based hydroxyl functional acrylic emulsion for two component coatings for the cross-linking with hydrophilic and hydrophobic isocyanates. It is used for top coats with excellent resistance and high gloss. The solid content is 45% and the hydroxyl content is 4.1%.

WorléeKyd SD 7003 is an alkyd resin for high solid systems which complies with European and American VOC guidelines. It is a low viscous air-drying long oil alkyd resin for high gloss or satin architectural and maintenance lacquers with low VOC content. WorléeKyd SD 7003 is available with a solid content in de-aromatized hydro carbons.



Pete D., Manager General Maintenance



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