

WORLD FURNITURE MAGAZINE

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WORLD FURNITURE MAGAZINE – Year 1 – June 2024



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SPOTLIGHT

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REACH and SCIP: Obligations, the Recent Restriction for Formaldehyde and Related Exclusions

The REACH Regulation is the acronym for "Registration, Evaluation, Authorization and Restriction of Chemicals". It applies to chemical substances used in the most diverse sectors: not only to those substances or mixtures used in industrial processes, therefore, but also to those that are used daily, for example in detergents or paints, and those present in articles. Therefore its field of application is extensive.

Most of the objects we use daily are articles, for example: furniture, clothing, vehicles, toys, etc ... An article can be very simple, for example a wooden chair, or very complex like an electrified piece of furniture.

The REACH regulation defines an article as "an object to which they are given during its production, a particular shape, surface or design which determines its function to a greater extent than its chemical composition".

Although the chemical composition of articles may not be obvious, they may still contain substances that are of concern to human health and the environment. In particular, the REACH regulation draws attention to those substances on the Candidate List for authorization, which may be present in articles and subject to additional obligations for companies producing, importing or placing such articles on the market.

The first obligation is to provide the recipients of these articles with the information necessary to ensure that they are used safely; in this context, the term recipients refer to industrial or professional users and distributors and not to final consumers. However, the information can also be requested by consumers and made available free of charge within 45 days.

The second obligation is SCIP notification. The SCIP notification obligation concerns all articles, without exception, as defined by the REACH regulation, placed on the EU market containing a substance included in the candidate list in a concentration higher than 0.1% w / w.

SCIP is the database containing information relating to

substances of concern in articles as such or in complex objects (products) [Substances of Concern In articles, as such or in complex objects like Products].

The SCIP database, also from a circular economy perspective, ensures that information relating to articles containing substances included in the Candidate List is available during the entire life cycle of products and materials, including the disposal phase as waste.

The SCIP database has three main objectives:

1. reduce the production of waste containing hazardous substances by supporting the replacement of substances included in the candidate list;
2. make information available to further improve waste treatment operations;
3. allow the authorities to monitor the use of hazardous substances.

THE RECENT RESTRICTION ON FORMALDEHYDE

On July 17, 2023, the introduction of Regulation (EU) 2023/1464 was officially announced, implementing the long-anticipated REACH restriction concerning formaldehyde. This process was initiated by the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) on behalf of the European Commission in 2017. The modification of Annex XVII of Regulation (EC) No. 1907/2006, containing active restrictions, was carried out through the inclusion of entry 77.

Starting from August 6, 2026, the recent regulation came into effect, it will be prohibited to introduce articles (a term used by REACH to refer to products, including semi-finished ones) with a formaldehyde emission level exceeding 0.062 mg/m³, specifically for furniture and wood-based products.

This limit precisely corresponds to half of the E1 emission class, as specified in Appendix B of the UNI EN 13986 standard.

The Annex to the regulation details the test conditions to be followed. For products other than furniture and wood articles, a limit of 0.080 mg/m³ is set, with varying adjustment times

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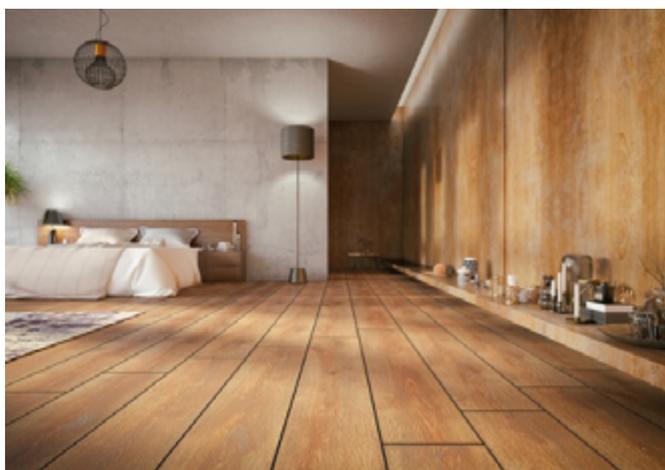
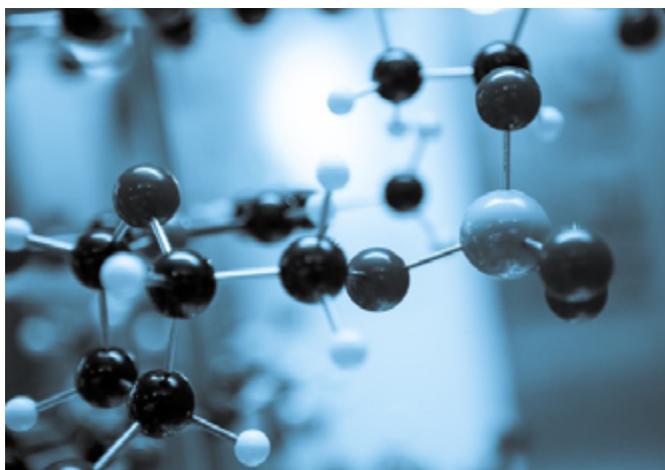


in some cases. The restriction aims to ensure a significant reduction in formaldehyde emissions in the environment, concurrently promoting consumer safety and public health protection.

The regulation has exclusions, which CATAS want to emphasize are not the same as those known in previous years under CARB and later under TSCA Title VI, in the following cases:

1. Articles where formaldehyde or substances releasing formaldehyde are exclusively naturally present in the materials used for their production;
2. Articles intended solely for outdoor use under predictable conditions;
3. Construction articles used exclusively outside the building envelope and vapor barrier, which do not emit formaldehyde into the indoor air;
4. Articles intended exclusively for industrial or professional use, unless the formaldehyde emissions from them result in predictable public exposure conditions;
5. Articles subject to the restriction under entry 72; f) Biocides within the scope of Regulation (EU) No. 528/2012;
6. Devices subject to Regulation (EU) 2017/745;
7. Personal protective equipment within the scope of Regulation (EU) 2016/425;
8. Articles intended to come into direct or indirect contact with foodstuffs falling within the scope of Regulation (EC) No. 1935/2004;
9. Used articles.

In conclusion, the REACH Regulation is an important pillar in protecting human health and the environment from exposure to chemicals of concern. The restrictions imposed on these substances, as in the case of formaldehyde, demonstrate the commitment of European authorities to ensuring consumer safety and promoting environmental sustainability.





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