

Dimethylfumarate (DMF)

Information meeting

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Shirley Mifsud

Market Surveillance Directorate

Malta Standards Authority

DMF

Definition

“DMF” means the chemical dimethylfumarate

DMF is a biocide used mainly to prevent mould growth on consumer products during storage or transport

Consumer products which may contain DMF



Properties & Effects of DMF

- ◆ DMF is readily absorbed through the skin, inhaled or ingested
- ◆ DMF is a potent liver toxin
- ◆ DMF may cause:
 - ◆ Abdominal pains
 - ◆ Headache
 - ◆ Weakness
 - ◆ Respiratory problems
 - ◆ Skin dermatitis (itching, redness, burns)





The Poison chair incident

◆ *1st case identified in 2006-2007*

Chinese manufacturer Linkwise produced two-seater sofas with DMF. In Finland where these chairs were sold from 2006-2009, 60 users were given a serious rash.

◆ *Other cases in the UK*

Sofas by Argos: Sofas were withdrawn from stores and contacted buyers to collect those that had been sold

Land of Leather: Withdraw sofas from market but no call back from customers

Walmsley: Said they had removed the sachets from sofas they sold after the danger came to light

BUT still Land of Leather and Walmsley are facing a \$10 million case suit over their reaction to the incident and since no call back had been made.

DMF analysis

- ◆ Sample of 0.5 – 1g
- ◆ Extraction with a solvent e.g. ethanol
- ◆ Gas-chromatography-Mass-spectrometry (GC-MS)
- ◆ About 4 hours
- ◆ Around 170 euros

DMF and EU legislations

Two main legislations



Commission Directive **98/8/EC** of the European Parliament and of the Council of the 16th February 1998 concerning the placing of biocidal products on the market “The Biocides Directive”

States that no product manufactured in EU can legally contain DMF

European Commission Decision **2009/251/EC** of the 17th March 2009

States that no consumer product whether manufactured in EU or imported from a non EU country shall contain DMF

Commission Directive 98/8/EC

The Biocides Directive

- ◆ Article 3 (1) requires Member States to prescribe that a biocidal product shall not be placed on the market and used in their territory unless it has been authorized in accordance with the Directive
- ◆ Use of Biocidal products containing DMF has been banned since 1998. Thus, biocidal products containing DMF are not legally available in the Community for the treatment of products against moulds, and thus no product manufactured in the EU can legally contain DMF

Commission Decision 2009/251/EC

European Commission Decision 2009/251/EC of the 17th March 2009 requires Member States to ensure that products intended for consumers and containing DMF where either:

- (1) The presence of DMF is declared, such as on one or more pouches, or
- (2) The concentration of DMF is greater than 0.1 mg/kg of the weight of the product or part of the product

Are not placed or made available on the market in order to prevent the serious risk posed by these products to consumers, until a permanent solution becomes available

Commission Decision

2009/251/EC *cont...*

- ◆ “placing on the market” means the first making available of a product on the Community market
- ◆ “made available on the market” means supplied for distribution, consumption or use on the Community market in the course of a commercial activity, whether in return for payment or free of charge

Way forward as of the 1st May 2009

- ◆ As of the 1st May 2009, Member States shall ensure that products containing DMF are prohibited from being placed or made available on the market.
- ◆ As of the 1st May 2009, Member States shall ensure that products containing DMF and already placed or made available on the market are withdrawn from the market and recalled from consumers, and that consumers are adequately informed of the risk posed by such products

Way forward as of the 1st May 2009 *cont...*

- ◆ Member States must carry out market surveillance and enforcement activities to prevent risk posed by unsafe products to the Health and Safety of consumers
- ◆ Member States shall inform the commission without delay of the measures taken in accordance with Article 12 of Directive 2001/95/EC (RAPEX notifications).
RAPEX notifications can be checked on web site:

http://ec.europa.eu/consumers/dyna/rapex/rapex_archives_en.cfm

For further information please contact:

Regulatory Affairs Directorate

Tristan Camilleri

Head- Regulatory Affairs Directorate

Malta Standards Authority

2nd Floor, Evans Building,

Merchants' Str., Valletta VLT 1179

Tel: +356 23952000

Fax: +356 21 242406

e-mail: tristan.cammilleri@msa.org.mt

URL: www.msa.org.mt

Audrey Anne Anastasi

Regulatory Affairs Directorate

Malta Standards Authority,

Second Floor, Evans Building,

Merchant Street, Valletta VLT 1179

Tel: 00356 23952000

Fax: 00356 21242406

E-mail: audrey-anne.anastasi@msa.org.mt

URL: www.msa.org.mt

Market Surveillance Directorate

Ing. Michael Cassar

Head- Market Surveillance Directorate

Malta Standards Authority

2nd Floor, Evans Building,

Merchants' Str., Valletta VLT 1179

Tel: +356 23952000

Fax: +356 21 242406

e-mail: michael.b.cassar@msa.org.mt

URL: www.msa.org.mt

Shirley Mifsud

Market Surveillance Directorate

Malta Standards Authority,

Second Floor, Evans Building,

Merchant Street, Valletta VLT 1179

Tel: 00356 23952000

Fax: 00356 21242406

E-mail: shirley.mifsud@msa.org.mt

URL: www.msa.org.mt

Thank you for your
attention