

Canada Bans Perfluorooctane Sulfonates (PFOSs) and Related Chemicals

The Canada Gazette recently published a general ban on the usage of perfluorooctane sulfonates (PFOSs) and related chemicals in consumer products. The ban has been effective since 29 May 2008.

The Canadian Government recently strengthened the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999 (CEPA 1999), by implementing the 'Perfluorooctane Sulfonate and its Salts and Certain other Compounds Regulations'¹ to restrict the use of PFOS and related compounds in general consumer products. Under subsection 93 (1) and section 319 of CEPA, 1999, there is a general ban on the use of PFOSs in consumer products. Some applications are permitted eg fume suppressants in the following for a period of 5 years after the effective date:

- Chromium electroplating, chromium anodizing plating and reverse etching,
- Electroless nickel-polytetraethylene plating,
- Etching of plastic substrates prior to their metalisation.

The primary use of PFOSs were applications involving water, oil, soil and grease repellents (eg on fabric, leather, paper, packaging, rugs and carpets) and as additives in firefighting foams, paints and coatings.

In the European Union, PFOSs have been restricted since late June 2008. The permissible limits are dependent on the nature of the article². Highlights on the restriction of PFOS in Canada and the EU are summarised in the table¹.



¹. Canada Gazette, Vol. 142, No. 12; June 11, 2008; Registration SOR/2008-178 May 29, 2008; <http://gazette.ducanada.gc.ca/partII/2008/20080611/html/sor178-e.html>

². Safeguards 11/07 'Directive 2006/122/EC: Tighter Restrictions on the Marketing and use of Perfluorooctane Sulfonates', February 2007; Safeguards 15/06 'Restriction on the Marketing and use of Perfluorooctane Sulfonates', March 2006.

Table 1

SUBSTANCE	CANADA			EUROPEAN UNION		
	Restriction for	Max. Limit	Effective Date	Restriction for	Max. Limit	Effective Date
Perfluorooctane Sulfonates (PFOSs) $C_8F_{17}SO_2X$ X = OR, NR or other derivatives)	General ban	Prohibited	May 29 2008	Substance or constituent of preparations	$\leq 0.005\%$	June 27 2008
				Semi-finished products or articles, or parts thereof	$\leq 0.1\%$	
				Textiles or other coated materials	$\leq 1 \mu g/m^2$	
Exemption 1) Photoresists or anti-reflective coatings for photolithography processes 2) Photographic films, papers and printing plates 3) Hydraulic fluids for aviation						

Throughout our global network of laboratories, we are able to provide a range of services, including analytical testing and consultancy for PFOSs in consumer products for worldwide markets. Please do not hesitate to contact us for further information.



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