



REPRESENTING THE HIGH TEMPERATURE INSULATION WOOL INDUSTRY

ECFIA INFO

Dear reader

The ECFIA Team hopes that you remain safe and in good health during these difficult times. Despite the unprecedented crisis caused by the Covid19 Pandemic and the resulting limitations, we maintained most of our activities, including our regulatory monitoring and our continued efforts to enable HTIW users to handle our products safely – some of the latest outcomes are reflected in more detail in this newsletter and on our homepage www.ecfia.eu. We hope you find this interesting and informative and – above all – we hope you stay safe!

Topics

- Respirators & alternatives (Covid)
- PIMEX videos
- Care guidance translations
- SCIP database update

If you would like to get in touch with ECFIA on any of these topics please contact: info@ecfia.eu

Respirators & alternatives (Covid)

As the Covid-19 pandemic continues to spread across the world one unfortunate consequence is that respiratory protective equipment (RPE) has become less readily available. Companies are now looking at alternative ways to protect their workers from workplace dust including alternate supplies of masks as well as changes to working conditions to minimise exposure.

Below are some points to consider when looking at implementing either of these approaches.

Alternate Mask Supply

With global shortages of FFP2/N95 masks and countries prioritising supplies for frontline health workers industrial users are looking elsewhere to source masks.

In order to ensure proper levels of protection are maintained any masks used should be correctly certified with CE marking from an authorised notified body. When looking at a CE Certificate there are several points to check.

1. Does the certificate say CE certificate and not certificate of compliance/conformity?
2. Is the certificate issuer listed on the [EU website](#) for authorised notified bodies?
3. Does the certificate show up on the companies online checker if they have one available?
4. If no online checker is available do the address and website/contact details match the details listed on the EU database or the companies own website?

If there is any doubt about the certificate the issuing body should be contacted for confirmation of authenticity.

When masks are delivered to site a visual inspection should be undertaken before use, the BOHS have produced a very useful visual guide on what to look for to confirm CE marking on individual masks which can be downloaded here: <http://www.bohs.org/covid-hub-technical-information/>

Changes to working practices

As workplaces across Europe begin to reopen and different ways of working are implemented to minimise the risk of Covid-19 infection, some of these measures may also result in a reduction of dust exposure in the workplace. Any changes to working practices should be considered and reviewed using appropriate risk assessment procedure to assess impact on workplace dust exposure.

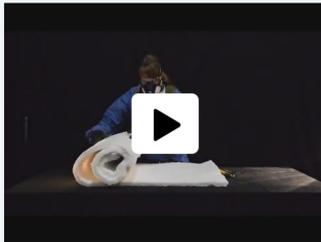
Examples of measures that may lead to a reduction in dust exposure include:

- More vigorous and frequent workplace cleaning will prevent dust build up
- Reduced workforce numbers and social distancing will potentially reduce dust generation particularly where manual finishing and packing workstations are separated or reduced in numbers.
- Additional measures such as improved segregation with the use of plastic shielding between workstations and reduced working hours may also reduce a workers overall exposure.

If it can be demonstrated that exposure to dust has reduced significantly below any applicable OEL's, it may be possible to allow the workers to perform certain tasks of short duration (e.g. walking through a plant) without using RPE to ensure it remains available for workers who require it.

Before making any changes to RPE policy a risk assessment review should be undertaken and if there are any doubts a qualified Occupational Hygienist should be consulted.

PIMEX videos



Cutting blanket

The **PIMEX system** – is a real time visualisation technique, that can be used in various HTIW related applications to help evaluate the effect of various factors in the working environment on the generation of fibrous dust in air. This technique can help to inform about the potential impact of these factors on individual exposure.

Consideration of the nature of the product used, the type of task undertaken, the level of control measures and an individuals' behaviour, can influence the emission of fibrous dust into the air.

PIMEX has been used in various scenarios to demonstrate both good and bad practices.

The following videos clips using PIMEX, demonstrate this point.

(N.B. The dust concentration levels within the videos are purely indicative, of total, thoracic and respirable dust concentrations and not absolute.)

More videos:

Cleaning

Stacking

Cutting board

CARE guidance translations

ECFIA has established a series of CARE Guidance Documents which form a comprehensive library of information on the safe handling and use of HTIW products. There several levels; level 1 is the overarching one; level 2 provides more detail on risk management measures applicable to HTIW covering important generic elements of exposure control; level 3 provides guidance on particular scenarios or applications. The level 1 and 2 documents are also available in French and German; as well as some of the level 3 documents. The translation into French and German of the remaining ones is ongoing.

[Check for latest updates on CARE Guidance documents](#)

SCIP database update

ECFIA keeps on monitoring the development of ECHA's "substances of concern in articles and complex objects (products)" database – or short: SCIP database. We summarized the current status in a Regulatory Update.

[Read our SCIP database update](#)

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