

FYI - 0399 - 1353

March 9, 1999

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& WILSON**

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Attention: TSCA 8(e) Coordinator

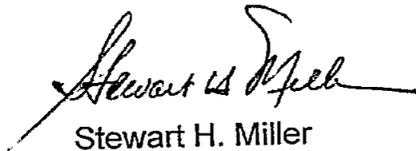
MR 19730

Re: For Your Information ("FYI") Submission

Albright & Wilson Americas (A&WA) is submitting the following information that may be of interest to the EPA. This information, while indicating some degree of risk, does not indicate, in our opinion, a "substantial risk" which is reportable under Section 8(e) of the Toxic Substances Control Act, and this information is therefore being submitted on an FYI basis.

A&WA has received information from its parent corporation Albright & Wilson U.K. LTD. regarding results from a 13-week subchronic inhalation (repeated dose) study (with mutagenicity assessment) for Acetic Anhydride, CAS No. 108-24-7. As a precautionary reaction to the new toxicology information, the principal European suppliers of acetic anhydride have decided to adopt a lower occupational exposure limit on a voluntary basis. They will adopt an occupational exposure limit of 1 ppm (averaged over 8 hour working day) and encourage other manufacturers and users of this material to meet this new lower standard. The current exposure limit for acetic anhydride set by the US American Conference of governmental Industrial Hygienists is 5 ppm over an eight hour time weighted average.

Sincerely,



Stewart H. Miller
Product Stewardship Department
Senior Consulting Engineer

CONTAINING
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XC: Mr. John Stoney - Charleston, SC



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Date: 19 February, 1999

Paul H. Smith
ALBRIGHT & WILSON
PO Box 3 Oldbury
Warley,
West Midlands B68 0NN

Dear Sir/Madam

Acetic Anhydride Occupational Exposure Limits

Please find enclosed a copy of a document released on 15 February 1999 by the CEFIC Acetyls Sector Group regarding Acetic Anhydride Occupational Exposure Limits.

This document explains why the principal suppliers of Acetic Anhydride in Europe including BP Amoco Chemicals have decided to voluntarily reduce their Operational Exposure Limits from 5ppm to 1ppm (averaged over 8 hour working day).

This decision has been taken following the release of results from a new test carried out by Celanese Canada (details covered in the attached document). Currently Occupational Exposure Limits exist in Germany, USA & UK but the principal suppliers would encourage all other manufacturers and users to work towards voluntarily meeting a limit of 1ppm.

In addition, the UK is considering a further reduction to 0.5ppm but will be subject to additional industry technical information being submitted to the UK Government.

If you require further information relating to the implications of this voluntary change, please contact me and I will then direct your enquiry to the correct expert within BP Amoco Chemicals.

Yours sincerely

P. Goodwin

SP.

STEVE MOULD
Acetyls Sales Manager

CONTAINS NO...

ACETYL S ECTOR GROUP



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Voluntary Reduction In Acetic Anhydride Occupational Exposure Limit

As part of our continuing Product Stewardship efforts to keep you informed regarding new developments this is to inform you of some new toxicity testing results on acetic anhydride. Contributing to the Organisation for Economic Community Development (OECD) Screening Information Data Set (SIDS) Programme, Celanese Canada voluntarily conducted an inhalation study in rats to provide more information on acetic anhydride.

We have received results from the test, a 13-week subchronic inhalation (repeated dose) study (with mutagenicity assessment). The dose levels were 1,5 and 20 ppm acetic anhydride vapour; recovery groups were included to see whether any effects observed were reversible. Clinical observations of eye and respiratory tract irritation and reduced body weights were observed primarily at 20 ppm. Microscopic examination of tissues revealed signs of irritation of minimal severity in the respiratory tract in most animals at the 5 ppm exposure level. At 20 ppm, all animals showed minimal to moderate signs of respiratory tract irritation. No effects were detected at 1 ppm. No mutagenic effects were noted. In animals exposed to the same levels (1,5 and 20 ppm) of acetic anhydride for 13 weeks and then allowed a 13-week period without exposure significant recovery from irritation effects was reported. In summary, the effects were consistent with those typical of substances which act as local/site-or-contact irritants.

As a precautionary reaction to new toxicology information, the principal European suppliers of acetic anhydride¹ have decided to adopt a lower occupational exposure limit on a voluntary basis. They will adopt an occupation exposure limit of 1 ppm (averaged over 8 hour working day) and encourage other manufacturers and users of this material to meet this new lower limit.

Occupational Exposure Limits exist for acetic anhydride in a limited number of countries. The German MAK Commission and US American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists both have limits of 5 ppm over an eight hour time weighted average. UK Health and Safety Executive and French INRS limits are set as 5 ppm 15 minute Short Term Exposure Limits, with no eight hour time weighted average values having been assigned.

The latest news is that the UK government is considering a further reduction of the occupational exposure limit to 0.5 ppm (8 hour time weighted average) with a 15 minute short term exposure limit of 2 ppm. This might come effective from January 2001 with a possibility that this might be adopted by the EU Scientific Committee on Occupational Exposure Limits at some later stage. However, additional industry technical information is being provided to the UK government to insure that the final OEL is based on current, scientifically sound data.

Should you wish to have further information on this matter please contact Carine Jeukenne, Acetyls Sector Group at CEFIC or your supplier of acetic anhydride.

¹ The principal suppliers of acetic anhydride in Europe are represented by the Acetyls Sector Group of the Council of the European Chemical Industry (CEFIC). Acetyls Sector Group companies supplying acetic anhydride are:

Acetex
BP Chemicals
Celanese GmbH
Eastman Chemical BV
Lonza