

DINP/DIDP – Safe for Use in Automotive Applications - Official

Following the European Union (EU) conclusions that the PVC plasticisers ‘Di-isononyl phthalate’ (DINP) and ‘Di-isodecyl phthalate’ (DIDP) are officially safe for use in automotive applications, both producers and users are facing the future with renewed confidence.

DINP and DIDP receive regulatory clean bill of health

More than 10 years after the start of the EU’s regulatory assessment of DINP and DIDP, the publication in April 2006 of the assessments’ conclusions have finally given the plasticiser industry something to shout about.

Conducted by experts from the EU’s 25 member countries, the assessments come to the conclusion that the substances are safe for use in all of their current automotive applications.

The EU assessment process is regarded by many as a global gold standard due to its comprehensive nature and the EU’s strong reputation in the field of environmental protection. DINP and DIDP are among only 39 chemicals out of 100,204 existing substances in Europe to have completed this process.

Following recent EU legislation limiting the use of the substances in toys and childcare articles and proposed new food contact regulations, the EU conclusions now clearly state that there is no need for any further measures to

regulate the use of DINP and DIDP in any other application.

Producers of phthalates – plastic additives that make PVC soft – have weathered media scare stories often based on poor science. As Dr. David Cadogan of the European Council for Plasticisers and Intermediates (ECPPI) explains “As an industry we took a decision to build on our products’ 40 year track record of safe use by investing in further research for the long term future of our products. The results of this regulatory process provide a scientific basis upon which customers are able to safely use our products and fulfil our own commitment to research under Vinyl 2010 [the PVC industry’s voluntary commitment to sustainability].”

EU confirms DINP and DIDP can be used in automotive applications

Soft-PVC plasticized with DINP and DIDP is recognised as a material whose qualities of flexibility, UV stability, anti-fogging, light weight and cost-effectiveness are widely sought after in automotive applications.

Soft-PVC helps car manufacturers respond to increased consumer demand for leather interiors at cost effective prices, while as a lightweight plastic it can help decrease fuel consumption and reduce CO2 emissions compared to other materials.

The EU assessments examine the use of DINP and DIDP across automotive applications such as car interiors, synthetic leather and protective underbody car coatings and come to the conclusion that the substances are safe for use in all their current automotive applications.



Indeed, according to the EU assessments, an adult could spend 24 hours per day, 7 days per week for an entire lifetime in a car containing DINP or DIDP and still be well within safe limits.

Data rich and ready for REACH

As two of the most well researched chemicals in Europe, DINP and DIDP are in an enviable position as REACH approaches. As Dr. Cadogan points out, “With over 350 referenced studies in the DINP EU Risk Assessment and over €130 million spent by industry on plasticiser related research, DINP and DIDP are data rich and well prepared for registration under REACH.” Moreover, the fact that neither DINP nor DIDP are classified as hazardous means that

the data generated over the last 10 years already goes beyond what will be required for the substances’ REACH registration.

After many years of hard work the European plasticiser industry will continue to support the safe and sustainable use of its products. “As we enter the REACH era we shall continue to base our work on sound science, while seeking to provide as much information and assistance as possible to users of DINP and DIDP” explains Dr. Cadogan.

As a first step in this process, the user focused information sites www.dinp-facts.com/RA and www.didp-facts.com/RA provide both the full text and summaries of the official EU conclusions for all users of the substances. ■

