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European Trade Union Confederation [ETUC]
Confédération européenne des syndicats [CES]

ETUC and IndustriAll call on their members to act as REACH ambassadors in companies

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and the European trade union IndustriAll are convinced of the importance of the new EU chemical law (REACH) this is why they are calling on their member organisations to alert employers about their responsibilities through a new campaign in collaboration with the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA).

The ETUC and IndustriAll are launching another extensive information campaign aimed at companies that market or use chemicals. The new campaign will kick off at the 8th annual trade union conference on chemicals and workers' protection (26-27 June, Brussels) in the presence of delegates from across Europe. The two European unions plan to draw on all their member organisations and their thousands of elected representatives in companies all-over Europe to raise awareness about employers' obligations under the REACH regulation.

REACH says that industrial operators must register any chemicals they manufacture or import in quantities above one tonne a year with the new European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) to show that they can be used safely.

Too many firms in the EU, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), are still not aware of these obligations, and could end up being fined or having some of their production lines stopped by the national enforcement authorities if they do not fulfill their obligations on time. The next deadline – 31 May 2013 is rapidly approaching. So, the ETUC and IndustriAll are looking to all their member organisations in Europe to pass on an information leaflet to employers which has been prepared in collaboration with ECHA and the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, who are both supporting the campaign.

The leaflet provides a simple checklist on the actions to be undertaken by companies importing, producing or using chemicals in order for them to comply with the EU legislation.

More information: the information leaflet on REACH aimed at workers' reps is available in all EU languages on the ETUC website (<http://www.etuc.org/r/830>) and the IndustriAll website (<http://www.industriall-europe.eu/>)

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