

Shipping to Europe?

New GHS requirements for classification and labelling will be in force soon.

On September 3, 2008, the European Union's (EU) Parliament adopted legislative reports concerning the EU proposal for a Regulation on classification, labelling and packaging (CLP) of substances and mixtures, in their first reading agreement. The first reading agreement came after the approval of a compromise package on 27 June 2008, which the Permanent Representatives Committee ("COREPER") developed.

The EU's proposal aims to maintain the current levels of protection, and to ensure a smooth transition to a new system based on the UN's Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling (GHS).

The EU's CLP proposal will require the reclassification and labelling of most substances by December 1, 2010, and June 1, 2015 for mixtures. Following entry into force of the new EU CLP system, substances and mixtures must still be classified under the current EU system of classification and labelling, however, may be voluntarily classified according to the CLP system before the above dates.

There are unique transitional provisions that will be applied in the EU's new CLP Regulation. One such provision is that from December 1, 2010 until June 1, 2015, substances will be required to be classified under both the current EU classification system and the new CLP system, both classifications being required to be shown on the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) in section 15.

Similar to the EU's current system, the new CLP Regulation also establishes harmonized lists classification and labelling of substances. The CLP Regulation has also established 'translation tables' to convert classifications under the current EU system into the new CLP classification. The translation tables in the new CLP system will allow suppliers and manufacturers to avoid having to reclassify all of the substances and mixtures that they have already completed classifications for under the current EU system, thus smoothing the transition into the new system.

The entry into force date of the new CLP Regulation is set at 20 days following publication in the Official Journal of the European Union. The CLP Regulation has not, as of yet, been officially published.

For more information on the new EU CLP regulation, please feel free to contact the Regulatory staff at ICC the Compliance Center, and we'll be glad to assist you. In addition, the European Commission has established the several webpages on their website (http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/reach/ghs_legislation_en.htm) dealing with the proposal and legislation news.