



ETAD Position on the aniline content in textiles

ETAD's attention has recently been drawn to a publication using the aniline content in textiles as a parameter for the categorization of garments as regards their safety for consumers. In particular, an aniline content of more than 5 ppm was set as the limit above which the garments should already be classified as "not sufficient". As clearly appears when looking at the regulatory status of aniline in Europe, this is a quite arbitrary application of the existing regulations.

Aniline is categorized in the European Union as a Cat. 3 carcinogen (substance which cause concern for man, owing to possible carcinogenic effects but in respect of which the available information is not adequate for making a satisfactory assessment). For the German MAK-Commission, aniline belongs to the German Cat. 4, which includes substances with carcinogenic potential for which a non-genotoxic mode of action is of prime importance, and for which no significant contribution to the risk of human cancer is expected.

The consumer risk of cancer due to dermal or respiratory exposure to aniline in textiles is therefore considered to be negligible and, for this reason, aniline does not belong to the critical substances which are routinely tested.

The only cases in which aniline is taken into account for the risk evaluation is when an oral exposure can be expected, as in cosmetics and in the very sensitive application of children toys. In the case of toys, the European Toys Directive prescribes a limit value for aniline which is exactly the 5 ppm threshold used in the publication about garments.

Therefore, it appears as a very misleading decision to include in the evaluation of textiles a substance which is a part of a very different standard and additionally to use the toys-related concentration limit in a completely different context. Any risk-related assessment of textiles based on such premises is not only scientifically inconsistent, but also potentially detrimental by causing unnecessary concern to the consumers.

In conclusion, aniline does not have a toxicological profile which could justify its use as a special discriminatory parameter for garments, and ETAD strongly disapproves of this and of any similar unfounded messages which interfere with a clear and responsible risk communication between manufacturers and end users.