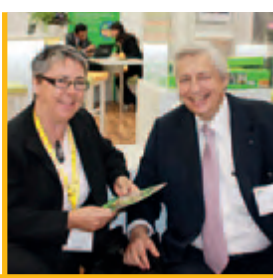




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OEKO-TEX® news

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20 years of OEKO-TEX® – 20 years of safe textile products

In 2012, the OEKO-TEX® Standard 100 will be celebrating its 20th anniversary. What, for you, is the greatest achievement of the OEKO-TEX® certification system?

Independent product certification under OEKO-TEX® Standard 100 provides effective protection against possible harmful substances in textiles – for the industry as a whole but of course also for the consumer. The continuous involvement of more than 9500 companies worldwide in the OEKO-TEX® system is creating lasting

awareness in the textile chain so that substances that may be harmful to health are being excluded from textile production across the board. With our record of performance, we are by far the most successful label in this field.

Can you give us an example?

The fact that nowadays allergenic heavy metals such as nickel, dispersion dyes and formaldehyde no longer cause significant problems as contact allergens in clothing or home textiles is thanks partly to product innovations

by the chemical industry but also to the OEKO-TEX® Standard 100 and the companies working with this system. It is true that for cost reasons many textiles are manufactured in third world or developing countries which often do not benefit from the necessary awareness of this kind of topic, and it is here that we can help to bring about a situation which is simply regarded as standard in the western world. Apart from the companies that are actively involved, the test criteria that apply internationally are also often used as a template for other organisations and companies and even for legal regulations.

What in your opinion are the reasons behind the global recognition and acceptance of the OEKO-TEX® label?

For textile and clothing manufacturers, and for retailers, OEKO-TEX® product certification is a useful and necessary supplement to their in-house quality controls. The certification of their articles by neutral third-party



Interview with OEKO-TEX® Secretary General Dr. Jean-Pierre Haug

institutions like the textile research and test institutes of the OEKO-TEX® Association is additional evidence for the quality of their products. Equally, the “Confidence in Textiles” label provides end users with a reliable guide when they are purchasing textiles. Since it is impossible even for experts to judge whether a textile is safe simply by looking at it, this kind of independent product labelling is a valuable aid in decision-making.

What other factors have contributed to the global success of OEKO-TEX® testing for harmful substances?

One key reason for its international popularity is the modular concept of



Joint signing of the first OEKO-TEX® statutes in February 1993 (f.l.t.r.): Raimar Freitag (Swiss Textile Testing Institute TESTEX), Prof. Wilhelm Herzog (Austrian Textile Research Institute ÖTI), Prof. Jürgen Mecheels, Dr. Rainer Weckmann, Dieter Walden, Dr. Stefan Mecheels (all Hohenstein Research Institute, Germany).



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20 Jahre / 20 años / 20 лет / 20 years / 20 Années

CONFIDENCE IN TEXTILES
 Tested for harmful substances according to Oeko-Tex® Standard 100 0000000

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 test criteria / Sustainability / Trust / Le monde parle OEKO-TEX® / Seguridad

The world speaks OEKO-TEX®

Editorial



Dear readers,

The group of substances called alkyl phenol ethoxylates (APEO), and their frequent use in the textile industry as tensides which are highly effective but problematic from an environmental point of view, has been widely discussed for many years. Nonyl phenol ethoxylates, for example, do not break down fully when they are released into the environment, and so they can accumulate in our food chain as nonylphenols and contaminate it.

This is why the European Union has regulated the industrial use of nonyl phenol ethoxylates and nonylphenol since 2003. The EU REACH Directive includes these regulations in Annex XVII and limits the volume of nonyl phenol ethoxylate and nonylphenol as a substance or ingredient in compound preparations to 0.1% by weight. Under the production-based OEKO-TEX® Standard 1000, there has been a process-related parameter banning APEOs from use since 1995.

In order to exclude APEOs even more efficiently right along the textile chain, the OEKO-TEX® Association has decided also to include certain substances in this group in its product certification under the OEKO-TEX® Standard 100. The new regulations apply with immediate effect, but they will only be included in the certification process after a transitional period of one year. Until the new limit values finally come into force in April 2013, we shall be telling you in detail about the environmentally damaging effects of APEOs during our factory visits. The OEKO-TEX® institutes will be glad to help you identify the possible origins of these substances and to find other tensides to substitute for them.

Jutta Knels,
Managing director of the
OEKO-TEX® Certification Centre
Frankfurt

20 years of OEKO-TEX® – 20 years of safe textile products

(continued from page 1)

OEKO-TEX® product certification, and the global presence of our members. In view of the decentralised structure of textile production across national borders and different processing stages, the OEKO-TEX® list of criteria is effective because it is globally consistent and can be applied to all elements of textile production – from the yarn and the fabric to the finishing and accessories. Because it recognises certified products from the preliminary stages, OEKO-TEX® certification is a suitable tool for communication right along the supply chain and ultimately ensures that certification is also attractive and affordable for garment manufacturers and distribution companies. Without them, such widespread use of the OEKO-TEX® label would not have been possible and it would never have attained its present level of recognition.

What is the advantage for companies of OEKO-TEX® product certification?

The aim of the OEKO-TEX® testing for harmful substances is to ensure that textiles are as free as possible from harmful substances, so that companies can be guaranteed maximum product safety at all times. One of the pillars on which it rests is the experience

and competence of the OEKO-TEX® member institutes. This is what lies behind the annual reassessment and further development of the existing list of criteria. However, the OEKO-TEX® institutes also bring together the necessary expertise so that they can properly interpret or evaluate the test results that are produced. On the other hand, for companies product safety also means – and this is not unimportant – knowing that they are complying with the relevant legislation. In this respect, OEKO-TEX® certification provides the perfect evidence, because new legislation is always taken into account in the annual defining of the test parameters and limit values. This means, for example, that every OEKO-TEX® certificate that is issued also confirms compliance with Annex XVII of the REACH legislation and with the regulations of the CPSIA in the USA on the total lead content in products for children. When it comes to the candidate list for substances of very high concern (SVHC), we also support the legally prescribed communication between B2B partners.

How do you see the future?

Our declared aim is to continue, with OEKO-TEX® certification, to provide companies with an excellent tool and undisputed added value in their quality control and their products, and, by consistently refining our test criteria, to make an effective contribution to excluding problematic substances along the textile chain. Another clear trend is that for a long time now consumers have not only wanted safe textiles, but they also expect reliable evidence of ecological and socially responsible textile production. That is why the certification of environmentally friendly production sites under the OEKO-TEX® Standard 1000 will definitely increase



in importance over the next few years, and this will ensure the availability of verifiably sustainable textile products in the retail trade.

Have you planned any special activities for the anniversary year?

Yes, we want to pay proper tribute to the international role of the OEKO-TEX® Standard 100 this year. For example, to improve the availability of information on the Internet, we are going to redesign the OEKO-TEX® website and make it better suited to meet the needs of our different target groups. We would like to involve retailers more closely in our activities, by organising a training competition in which specialist sales assistants from seven European countries, and, initially, three product segments can extend their knowledge of textiles tested for harmful substances and have the chance of winning attractive prizes. In addition to these examples and our usual international information events and participation in conferences and trade fairs, there are plans for lots of other activities that we will tell you about in due course.

Dr. Haug, thank you for talking to us.

SalesPro Games 2012

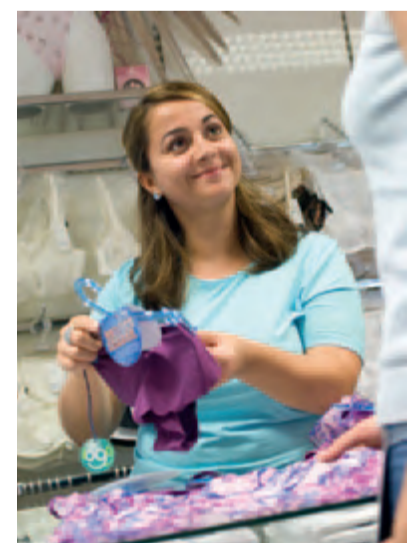
Training competition for sales professionals

Sales professionals from different product areas participating in the SalesPro Games can look forward to valuable prizes totalling more than EUR 10,000 – including a trip to the Olympic Games in London.

It is the first time this initiative is hosted by OEKO-TEX® Foundation in cooperation with the Bundesverband des Deutschen Textileinzelhandels (German Association

of the Textile Retail Trade, or BTE). Retail experts have until 15 May 2012 to register for the competition at www.oeko-tex.com/salespro free of charge, download training materials for the product areas of Baby & Junior, Day- and Nightwear & Outerwear and Home textiles, and complete the test.

The objective of the SalesPro Games is to communicate comprehensive information regarding textiles that have been tested for harmful substances, along with general sales techniques. Working with these training materials allows participants to directly apply this information when speaking to customers, and hence optimise the quality of their advice and sales successes.



Winners of the 2012 SalesPro Games can look forward to prizes totalling over EUR 10,000 – including a trip to the Olympic Games in London.



OEKO-TEX®
SalesPro Games 2012

