

Proposed Control of Certain Mercury-added Products in Singapore

Introduction

The National Environment Agency (NEA) of Singapore is carrying out a public consultation on the proposed plan to phase out the manufacture, import and export of certain mercury-added products (i.e., fluorescent lamps, high pressure mercury vapour lamps, switches and relays, and non-electronic measuring devices) by 1 Jan 2020.

Background

2 The Minamata Convention on Mercury is a global and legally binding instrument intended to protect human health and the environment from anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds. Singapore signed on to the Minamata Convention on 10 Oct 2013 indicating our commitment to safeguard public health and the environment, and we are working towards ratifying the Convention. As a Party to the Convention, one of the obligations is to phase out the manufacture, import and export of mercury-added products by 2020. The list of mercury-added products controlled under the Convention (including exemptions) is shown in **Annex 1**.

3 Many manufacturers have switched to producing alternatives to mercury-added products, in line with the global movement of businesses towards incorporating environmental considerations and in response to government policies. As alternatives to mercury-added products are now readily available, and as Singapore prepares to implement the obligations of the Convention, the domestic control measures for mercury-added products are currently being reviewed.

Current Domestic Controls on Mercury-added Products

4 Since 1 Jul 2009, mercury-containing clinical thermometers have been controlled as Hazardous Substances (HS) under NEA's Environmental Protection and Management Act (EPMA). Such thermometers are not allowed to be imported and sold for local use. Similarly, since 1 July 2012, compact fluorescent lamps containing more than 5mg of mercury per lamp, as well as linear and circular fluorescent lamps containing more than 10mg of mercury per lamp are controlled as HS under the EPMA. Compact, linear and circular fluorescent lamps containing mercury exceeding the stipulated limits are not allowed to be imported and sold for local use.

New and Enhanced Control Measures for Mercury-added Products in Singapore

5 NEA has been progressively reviewing the domestic control of mercury-added products. In the first phase, NEA focused on the control of mercury-added batteries and button cell batteries. From 1st Quarter 2018 onwards, NEA will tighten the allowable mercury content in batteries (including button cells) to 5 ppm (by weight) and below.

6 In the next phase of the review, NEA intends to control all the mercury-added products listed in Annex A of the Minamata Convention. NEA will also be exempting the applications that are excluded from control in the Convention. The proposed control measures for mercury-added products targeted and phase-out date are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Proposed control measures and phase-out date for certain mercury-added products

Mercury-added products	Proposed control measure – the manufacture, import and export of the products listed below will be phased-out	Proposed phase-out date
Lamps*		1 Jan 2020
Linear fluorescent lamps (LFLs)	LFLs for general lighting purposes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triband phosphor <60 watts with a mercury content exceeding 5 mg per lamp 	
High pressure mercury vapour (HPMV) lamps	HPMV lamps for general lighting purposes	
Cold cathode fluorescent lamps (CCFLs) and external electrode fluorescent lamps (EEFLs)	CCFLs and EEFLs for electronic displays: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short length (≤ 500mm) with mercury content exceeding 3.5 mg per lamp • Medium length (> 500 mm and ≤ 1500 mm) with mercury content exceeding 5 mg per lamp • Long length (> 1500 mm) with mercury content exceeding 13 mg per lamp 	
Non-electronic measuring devices		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barometers • Hygrometers • Manometers • Thermometers* 	The listed non-electronic measuring devices, except non-electronic measuring devices installed in large-scale equipment or those used for high precision measurement, where no suitable	

• Sphygmomanometers	mercury-free alternative is available.	
Switches and relays		
-	Switches and relays, except very high accuracy capacitance and loss measurement bridges and high frequency radio frequency switches and relays in monitoring and control instruments with a maximum mercury content of 20 mg per bridge, switch or relay.	

** Compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) for general lighting purposes ≤30 watts with a mercury content exceeding 5 mg per lamp burner, halophosphate phosphor LFLs ≤40 watts with a mercury content exceeding 10 mg per lamp and mercury clinical thermometers listed under the Convention are already controlled by NEA.*

Proposed Regulatory Control

7 Following industry consultation, NEA plans to gazette the control of the mercury-added products listed in Table 1 under the EPMA. From 1 Jan 2020, the manufacture, import and export of non-compliant mercury-added products in Singapore will not be allowed. Stocks of products listed in Table 1 that are imported and supplied in the market before the effective date will be allowed to be sold locally until they are depleted.

Compliance

8 Manufacturers, importers or distributors have to declare at import/export stage on the compliance of the mercury-added products and produce test reports/safety data sheets on the composition of the products.

9 The listed mercury-added products must be compliant with Singapore’s requirements. If a product is suspected to be non-compliant, NEA may request for the manufacturer/trader’s declaration of conformity and/or test reports. As part of the enforcement process, NEA conducts market surveillance whereby products are sent for testing. Companies with products that are found to be non-compliant may be subjected to product withdrawal and penalty.

ANNEX 1



Minamata
Convention Annex A