

## Paint, coatings and printing inks remain safe to use

CEPE (the European branch organisation of producers of paints, inks and artist colours) has noted that the European Chemical Agency (ECHA)'s Risk Assessment Committee has given an opinion that titanium dioxide (TiO<sub>2</sub>) should be classified as suspected of causing cancer by inhalation under the CLP regulation (for "Classification, Labelling and Packaging") in the EU. We also acknowledge that it's the first step in a longer regulatory process, and want to reassure, consumers and professional users that once TiO<sub>2</sub> is incorporated in paint or ink the risk of being exposed to the inhalation of the solid particles of TiO<sub>2</sub> is no longer present.

The paint, coatings and inks industry has always taken its responsibility for health, safety and the environment as its highest priority and has ensured that products meet the highest health and safety standards.

Titanium dioxide is an inert inorganic compound that is used as a white pigment in many industrial applications. These applications include the manufacture of paints, coatings, printing inks and wallcoverings where titanium dioxide plays a critical role in providing essential product properties: whiteness, covering power, brightness, stability and durability of colour that cannot be achieved with other raw materials. Titanium dioxide is also used in many other consumer products.

The powder form of titanium dioxide presents no risk to consumers when incorporated in a finished product. Consumers and professionals using paint or ink products cannot be exposed to the powder form of TiO<sub>2</sub>, once it is embedded into a paint or printing ink.

During the manufacturing process exposure to TiO<sub>2</sub> powder might occur, however both at EU and national level regulations exist around dust exposure and protection of workers. Studies over many years have not found any correlation between workers exposed to titanium dioxide, and the risk of lung cancer. In addition, the tests on rats cited by ECHA used unrealistically high amounts of titanium dioxide that would not be allowed in a manufacturing environment. Based on this, CEPE considers the use of titanium dioxide in paints, coatings, printing inks and wallcoverings to be safe for workers during the manufacturing process. This is further supported by the ongoing commitment of our member companies to take every precaution to ensure the safety of their products and workers throughout their supply chain.

ECHA have given an opinion that titanium dioxide should be classified as having the potential to cause cancer in its inhalable form. Under the current labelling rules this would result in the unintended consequence that products, even where titanium dioxide powder is no longer freely available, would have to be labelled as "suspected of causing cancer". Given the lack of evidence of any risk to any users, consumers or professionals, of coatings and other finished products containing titanium dioxide, industry (in particular CEPE) is challenging the legislation on this specific element.