

# **Strategies for success?**

Managing Chemical Risks in Small Enterprises:  
Review of European Practice – a CEFIC project

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# Aims

- Review **strategic approaches** to achieving effective and sustainable risk management of chemical substances in small enterprises, including approaches of regulators, industry and other stakeholders to the provision of exposure/risk management advice
- Identify main factors determining their effectiveness
- Explore what supports their application

# Risk management

- A broad concept including
  - information and education
  - risk identification
  - risk assessment
  - risk control
    - technical & organisational measures
    - work instructions
  
- Chemical risk management may include other activities
  - measurements,
  - registers of chemicals
  - medical examination
  - education

# Main concerns

- Evaluate the evidence of success
- Social, regulatory and economic contexts of successful approaches
- Understand success in these terms

# Where and how

- Six countries :
  - Austria
  - Germany
  - the Netherlands
  - Spain
  - Sweden and
  - the UK

# Outcomes

- Development of current approaches to chemical risk management
- Current strategies and tools
- Evidence of size of the problem chemical use in small enterprises/exposures/health effects etc

# What works?

- Strategies?
- Tools?
- What supports good practice?
- What is transferable?
- What is the evidence for this?

## Evidence for success?

- Few properly conducted studies
- Technically orientated implementation in controlled scenarios
- Some counts of uptake indicators like hits on websites
- Little known about quality of general use

**Current strategies  
based on limited scientific knowledge and  
few evaluation**



# **Risk management in SMEs - a Swedish perspective**

# The current situation

- Risk management (identification, assessment and control) is required for all potential risks according to Swedish provisions (Systematic work environment management)
- Inspections shows that this works poorly in many SMEs. Usually 70 % do not fulfil basic demands

# Why does risk management work poorly in SMEs?

- Lack of knowledge of what is required?
- Not perceived as necessary?
- Perceived as too difficult?
  - Evidence of SME:s not understanding the concept of risk mgmt
- Lack of time and motivation?
- No **good** tools available?
- No support from OHS or others?
- No one asks for risk management (rare inspections)?

# What is actually required from risk management

- Inspections in SMEs - main focus on presence, not quality of risk management
- Difficult to decide what is good enough

**= not a lot according to praxis!!!**

# What is actually required from risk management?

- According to many tools and methods developed by experts & researchers, very advanced methods in order to control most (and rare) risks

**= maybe too ambitious for SMEs ????**

# What is actually required from risk assessments?

- According to provisions on SWEM, two categories (more or less dangerous)
- For chemicals, with regard to exposure, risk of accidents, duration of exposure, inherent properties as toxicity, chemical reactions etc

**= varies a lot according to provisions!!!**

# Aim: methods & tools that suit most SMEs

$$\text{Effect of tool} = \text{Quality of method} \times \text{Acceptance among users}$$

# Examples of Swedish tools for risk management in SMEs

- Checklists for different sectors
- Risk thermometer (and thermometers for chemicals, ergonomics etc)
- Tools for systematic work environment management
- KemiGuiden a web-based interactive guide, [www.kemiguident.se](http://www.kemiguident.se)
  - interactive tool for risk assessment soon to be launched
- Information leaflets
- Book about chemical risk management



# Ongoing evaluation

- Methods for chemical risk evaluation with the aim to identify need for control measure and support implementation of such measures
- 8 different methods/tools, different approaches
- Evaluation of
  - 1) acceptance among users
  - 2) quality of outcome when using methods
- We are looking forward to the results of the evaluation!

**Read more ....**

**Within Reach?**

Managing Chemical Risks in Small Enterprises

David Walters

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