Information Note on REACH Restrictions of cadmium in jewellery, plastics and brazing sticks

Commission Regulation (EU) No. 494/2011 amends Annex XVII to the REACH Regulation (EC) No. 1907/2006) for cadmium. This Regulation sets out a new restriction on the placing on the market and the use of cadmium in jewellery, plastic and brazing sticks.

The restriction conditions, which apply to cadmium, can be found in entry no. 23 of Annex XVII and are as follows:

Substance	Restriction Conditions	Effective From

Cadmium	• Shall not be used in brazing fillers in concentration equal to or greater than 0.01% by weight.
	Brazing fillers shall not be placed on the market if the concentration of cadmium is equal to or greater than 0.01% by weight
	• Mixtures and articles produced from plastic material shall not be placed on the market if the concentration of cadmium is equal to or greater than 0.01% by weight of the plastic material
	• Cadmium shall not be used or placed on the market if the concentration is equal to or greater than 0.01% by weight of the metal in:
	  • metal beads or other metal components for jewellery making
	  • metal parts of imitation jewellery articles and hair accessories, including
	  • bracelets, necklaces and rings,
	  • piercing jewellery,
	  • wrist watches and wrist-wear,
	  • brooches and cufflinks
		10th January 2012

Additional Note:

The European Commission has banned cadmium in all jewellery products, plastics and brazing sticks from December 2011. High levels of cadmium have been found in some jewellery articles, especially in imported imitation jewellery. Consumers including children risked being exposed to cadmium through skin contact or through licking. The new legislation prohibits the use of cadmium in all types of jewellery products, except for antiques. The Commission has also banned cadmium in all plastics as from December 2011. The ban will protect the environment by reducing cadmium pollution. The new rules also promote the recovery of PVC waste for use in a number of construction products.

The restriction applies to the import and placing on the market jewellery and imitation jewellery containing cadmium and includes sales form the manufacturers to distributers and form distributers to retailers.

The EU Commission has recently confirmed that this restriction that the concentration threshold of Cd should be calculated in each metal part of the jewellery. This implies that each metal part is relevant; therefore the calculation of the concentration in this case is to be done for each component.

This prohibition does not apply to jewellery and imitation jewellery that has been placed on the market for the first time after 10th December 2011 thus such jewellery can be sold by the retailer or on the second hand market following the entry. A derogation also applies to antique jewellery that is more than 50 years old.