

Active Chlorine Campaign - 2022

Summary

A routine survey performed by a canton revealed concentrations of active chlorine in products of less than 30% of the declared values. Therefore, a campaign was launched at national level to investigate products containing active chlorine. The analytical results confirmed this trend. Half of the products analysed (51%) contain a concentration within the tolerance limits. The deviation of active chlorine within the different products compared to the declared concentration ranged from -100% (no chlorine) to +134% (more than double). Six products were sampled from different batches. With the exception of one product, the batches showed only a slight difference (max. 5%) among themselves.

In parallel to the analyses, the cantons carried out controls which showed that implementation of the legislation on biocidal products was unsatisfactory. Around 6% of the biocidal products checked were not authorised. Almost a quarter (23%) of the declared values on the safety data sheets indicated different active chlorine concentrations than those specified in the authorisation of the products. 10% of the products had unauthorised claims on their use. And finally, the residence time required for the biocidal effect to occur was either false or not indicated on the label/technical data sheet for 14% of the products. The cantons took measures for 31% of the controlled biocidal products in form of a decision or a ban on the sale. Oral or written information was provided for 44% of the products. Overall, only 22% of the biocidal products inspected showed no shortcomings, which is clearly too few.

The cantons also inspected chemical preparations containing active chlorine with trade names suggesting a biocidal action. Of these, 44% were unauthorised biocidal products. Around 40% of the products checked were preparations legally placed on the market. The remaining 16% were no longer on the market.

The various shortcomings observed in these products show that the legislation on biocidal products is not sufficiently well implemented. Too many products do not comply with the regulations and can therefore lead to greater risks for users. This may be due to the fact that companies are not sufficiently aware of the biocidal products legislation or that the effort required to implement everything correctly is simply too high for them.