

EUROFER/PRE¹ joint position on spent refractories

Possible routes for spent refractories

Refractories are purchased by Iron and Steel companies mostly as articles². After their economical lifetime, they are discarded and as such become waste. They can be either dismantled by staff of the Iron and Steel industry or by subcontractors and either:

1. taken back by the suppliers as waste within the scope of their supply contract;
2. put at the disposal of a waste treatment operator for sorting out, elimination and/or recovery;
3. sorted out under by staff belonging to Iron and Steel industry or by an appointed subcontractor and partly eliminated as waste and partly recovered for placing on the market for reprocessing and future reuse.

In cases 1 and 2: spent refractories are waste and therefore should not be considered as substances. The Iron and Steel industry has to implement risk management measures linked to dismantling, handling, storage and transportation.

In case 3: in this case, ECHA advises those involved in the recovery chain to pre-register the substances that are recovered from the spent refractories to be placed on the market/provided to another legal entity.

Conclusion

On the assumption that the following provisions of Article 2(7)(d) are fulfilled, the substances that are recovered from the spent refractories to be placed on the market/provided to another legal entity (whether it be imported or produced in the EU) would be exempted from registration:

- the substances recovered from the spent refractories will have already been registered by at least one legal entity – which must not be in the same supply chain -, or are exempted from registration through Annex IV and V of REACH; and
- these substances are not chemically modified during the recovery treatments; and
- the information following Articles 31 or 32 on the registered substances is available to the establishment undertaking the recovery.

However, in order to take advantage of the provisions of Article 2(7)(d) and the transition periods for registration of phase-in substances, *ECHA advises those involved in the recovery chain to pre-register the substances that are recovered for placing them on the market/to be provided to another legal entity.* This is because requirement 1 above of Article 2(7)(d) has yet to be fulfilled.

1 PRE stands for European Refractories Producers Federation

2 Sometimes also as powders (preparations)

Typical substances that can be recovered from spent refractories are: calcined dolomite, Magnesite, Carbon, Chromite, Bauxite, Alumina, Chromium oxide, Chamotte, Andalusite, Silica, Cordierite, Forsterite, SiC, Graphite, Zirconia and Zircon.

Pre-registration is not required in case the legal entity that is recovering the substances out of the spent refractories is the one that is also re-using these recovered substances without providing them to the market/another legal entity.

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