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Responsible Care[®] Global Charter



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Global Charter

Responsible Care[®] is the global chemical industry's environmental, health and safety (EHS) initiative to drive continuous improvement in performance. It achieves this objective by meeting and going beyond legislative and regulatory compliance, and by adopting cooperative and voluntary initiatives with government and other stakeholders. Responsible Care is both an ethic and a commitment that seeks to build confidence and trust in an industry that is essential to improving living standards and the quality of life.

The Responsible Care Global Charter arose from an examination of chemical industry practices and performance that has evolved since the mid-1980s, and was shaped by considering the recommendations of independent stakeholders from around the world. The Charter goes beyond the original elements of Responsible Care since its inception in 1985. It also focuses on new and important challenges facing the chemical industry and global society, including the growing public dialogue over sustainable development, public health issues related to the use of chemical products, the need for greater industry transparency, and the opportunity to achieve greater harmonization and consistency among the national Responsible Care programmes currently implemented. The International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA), through Responsible Care, will continue to undertake actions consistent with the environmental principles of the United Nations Global Compact.

The Responsible Care Global Charter contains nine key elements. They are:

1. Adopt Global Responsible Care Core Principles

The Global Responsible Care Core Principles commit companies and national associations to work together to:

- Continuously improve the environmental, health and safety knowledge and performance of our technologies, processes and products over their life cycles so as to avoid harm to people and the environment.
- Use resources efficiently and minimise waste.
- Report openly on performance, achievements and shortcomings.
- Listen, engage and work with people to understand and address their concerns and expectations.
- Cooperate with governments and organisations in the development and implementation of effective regulations and standards, and to meet or go beyond them.

- Provide help and advice to foster the responsible management of chemicals by all those who manage and use them along the product chain.

2. Implement Fundamental Features of National Responsible Care Programmes

Each national chemical association establishes and manages its own national Responsible Care programme based on a set of eight common fundamental features. They are:

- Establish and implement a set of Guiding Principles that member companies sign.
- Adopt a title and logo that are consistent with Responsible Care.
- Implement management practices through a series of systems, codes, policies or guidance documents to assist companies to achieve better performance.
- Develop a set of performance indicators against which improvements can be measured.
- Communicate with interested parties inside and outside the membership.
- Share best practices through information networks.
- Encourage all association member companies to commit to and participate in Responsible Care.
- Introduce and apply systematic procedures to verify the implementation of the measurable elements of Responsible Care by member companies.

Industry leaders support the national associations in the fulfillment of these fundamental features. The Charter defines specific commitments consistent with the fundamental features.

3. Commit to Advancing Sustainable Development

Responsible Care is a uniquely designed initiative that enables the global chemical industry to make a strong contribution to sustainable development. Through improved performance, expanded economic opportunities, and the development of innovative technologies and other solutions to societal problems, the industry will continue taking practical steps to implement initiatives in support of sustainable development. The industry will expand its dialogue with stakeholders to identify additional opportunities to contribute to sustainable development through Responsible Care.

The chemical industry recognizes the important contribution that can be made through capacity building of the sound management of chemicals to achieve sustainable development goals. The industry will continue to support national and international initiatives to advance these goals.

4. Continuously improve and report performance

Each chemical company that implements Responsible Care is expected to collect and report data for a core set of environmental, health and safety performance measures. Each national association is expected to collect, collate and report this data from its members in each country. The data will also be collated and reported publicly at the international level and be updated every two years at a minimum.

In order to continue to achieve improved performance, each national association that implements Responsible Care will:

- Periodically assess, with the participation of their members, stakeholder expectations for expanded or modified performance reporting or other aspects of performance.
- Commit to providing practical help and support in sharing and adopting best practices to improve environmental, health and safety performance, and other assistance related to Responsible Care implementation needs.

Chemical companies that implement Responsible Care will:

- Adopt a management systems approach to implement their Responsible Care commitments consisting of the internationally accepted elements of Plan-Do-Check-Act.
- Utilize clean and safe technologies and processes when building new plants or expanding their current facilities around the world.
- Go beyond self-assessment of the implementation of Responsible Care and adopt verification processes carried out either by associations, government bodies or other external organisations.

5. Enhance the Management of Chemical Products Worldwide – Product Stewardship

Product stewardship issues will increasingly shape the Responsible Care initiative in future years. The ICCA will establish a strengthened global programme to evaluate and manage chemical-related risks and benefits by developing a unified product stewardship management system approach. This approach will be in place by 2006.

National associations, working with their member companies, will commit to this concerted global effort by establishing processes for Responsible Care companies to:

- Re-commit to full implementation of current Responsible Care product stewardship commitments, including all existing codes, guidelines and practices.
- Improve product stewardship performance and increase public awareness of the industry's commitments and results.
- Develop and share best practices through mutual assistance.
- Work in partnership with upstream suppliers and downstream chemical users to collaborate on improved processes for the safe and effective uses of chemicals.
- Encourage and sustain support for education, research and testing approaches that will yield useful information about the risks and benefits of chemicals through such initiatives as the High Production Volume chemical testing program and the Long-range Research Initiative.
- Implement enhanced product stewardship commitments consistent with the ICCA's Global Chemicals Management Policy, and periodically assess product stewardship practices in the light of evolving societal expectations for chemical products.

6. Champion and facilitate the extension of Responsible Care along the chemical industry's value chain.

Responsible Care companies and associations commit to promoting the Responsible Care ethic, principles and practices along their own value chains and communicating the importance of the industry's economic and social contributions.

Chemical companies and national associations commit to increase dialogue and transparency with their business partners and other stakeholders and to expand knowledge and understanding of the management of chemicals. They will also work in partnership with national governments, multi-lateral and non-governmental organisations to define mutual assistance priorities and share access to information and expertise.

The global chemical industry will develop and share information and practices across companies consistent with competition law and other legal requirements.

7. Actively support national and global Responsible Care governance processes.

The chemical industry, through the ICCA, commits to an enhanced, transparent and effective global governance process to ensure accountability in the collective implementation of Responsible Care. The governance process will be implemented by the ICCA and will incorporate such issues as tracking and communicating performance commitments; defining and monitoring the implementation of Responsible Care obligations; supporting national association governance; helping companies and associations to achieve Charter commitments; and establishing a global process for

revoking, when necessary, the Responsible Care status of any company or association that fails to meet its commitments.

8. Address stakeholder expectations about chemical industry activities and products.

The global chemical industry will extend existing local, national and global dialogue processes to enable the industry to address the concerns and expectations of external stakeholders to aid in the continuing development of Responsible Care.

9. Provide appropriate resources to effectively implement Responsible Care.

Responsible Care is the signature performance initiative of the chemical industry and will have an increasingly important part to play as a basis for the industry's views in societal and regulatory discussions. Companies participating in Responsible Care must support and meet the requirements of the national programmes and provide sufficient resources for implementation.

For further information visit www.icca-chem.org or www.responsiblecare.org

The Chemical and Allied Industries' Association (CAIA) is responsible for implementing this Charter in South Africa



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