

# Focus on IFA's work

Edition 2/2017

617.0-IFA:638.1

## GESTIS substance database on the Internet: [www.dguv.de/ifa/gestis-database](http://www.dguv.de/ifa/gestis-database)

### Problem

Employees come into contact with a large number of chemical substances both during work itself and at other times. Supervisory staff and those directly affected are frequently unaware of possible health hazards, suitable measures for safety and first aid, and hazard classifications, limit values and other regulations, of which there is a bewildering number.

Employers are however obliged under the Ordinance on Hazardous Substances (German Gefahrstoffverordnung) to examine whether substances are hazardous, and to identify and evaluate the potential hazards associated with their use.

### Activities

In order to support the institutions for social accident insurance and prevention and their member companies, information has been gathered for this purpose in the GESTIS substance database and made available on the internet. In the process, the information on hazardous substances has become available to the general public. The GESTIS substance database contains information on about 8,750 substances.

The data are divided into the following categories: identification, characterisation, toxicology/ecotoxicology, physico-chemical properties, occupational health and first aid, safe handling, regulations, links, literature register. The data are updated continually.



Data sheet in the GESTIS substance database

### Results and Application

The GESTIS substance database on the Internet is very user-friendly. The particular technical features of the GESTIS substance database are:

- practical relevance: comprehensive information, suitable for practical application, on the safe handling of hazardous materials, including emergency measures;
- compliance with the regulations: substance-oriented implementation of the bodies of state and regulations of the social accident insurers;
- ongoing updating, e.g. of limit values and classifications;
- comprehensive occupational health information.

The information provided by the GESTIS substance database generally enables immediate decisions to be made in plant practice.

The great need for this information can be seen from the steady rise in the number of accesses. The average number of accesses per month was approximately 200,000 in 2015 for the German version.

The GESTIS substance database is available in an English and a German version for the benefit of the international public, see additional information.

### **Area of Application**

Social accident insurance institutions, employers, safety engineers and company physicians, fire departments, rescue services, all trade sectors, universities, other institutions, and the general public.

### **Additional Information**

- GESTIS substance database:  
English: [www.dguv.de/ifa/gestis-database](http://www.dguv.de/ifa/gestis-database)  
German: [www.dguv.de/ifa/stoffdatenbank](http://www.dguv.de/ifa/stoffdatenbank)  
incl. Tips & Tricks, FAQs, Links, Access difficulties

### **Expert Assistance**

IFA, Division 1: Information technology – Risk management