

Regulatory Alert

MEE Order 15: National Hazardous Waste List (2021 Edition)

Country: China

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INTENDED AUDIENCE
This Regulatory Alert is intended for IAEG members who have manufacturing operations in China, as they will need to classify their hazardous waste according to the new rules.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
<p>Background on Regulation:</p> <p>On 27 November 2020, the Chinese Ministry of Ecology and Environment (MEE), along with four other departments, published the National Inventory of Hazardous Waste (2021 edition) (MEE Order 15) which came into force on 1 January 2021. This replaces the existing version of the National Inventory from 2016 (Order No. 39 of the Ministry of Environmental Protection).</p> <p>This regulation covers hazardous waste that is toxic, corrosive, flammable, reactive or infectious, or may cause harm to the ecological environment or human health. The objective is to provide an inventory of hazardous waste category codes for industry use for proper waste management.</p> <p>The major revisions made to the regulation are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The inventory will be dynamically adjusted. • Expansion of the exemption list from 16 entries to 32 entries. • The requirements for the management of hazardous waste are to be determined by the competent department of ecology and environment.
APPLICABILITY
MEE Order 15 applies to the waste management of any hazardous waste generated in China.
RELEVANT DATES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Published: 27 November 2020 ❖ MEE Order No. 15 in force: 1 January 2021 ❖ Order No. 39 repealed: 1 January 2021

REGULATORY OBLIGATIONS

MEE Order 15 came into force on 1 January 2021.

The main obligation under this regulation is to use the dynamically changing list of 46 waste categories for hazardous waste management. The 2021 list has clearer definitions of hazardous waste generated (refer to definitions/descriptions in the Schedule of the regulation for more information).

For solid waste which hazardous properties are not clear, standards and methods for identifying hazardous waste set by local authorities are to be used. For the Medical Waste category, hazard properties of “chemical wastes” are changed from “T” (Toxicity) to “T/C/I/R” (Toxicity, Corrosivity, Ignitability and Reactivity).

Wastes on the exemption list are exempt from being treated as hazardous waste under specified conditions. The exemption list is expanded from 16 to 32 entries to include hazardous wastes with relatively small environmental risks. Exemptions relevant to Aerospace and Defense are highlighted below.

Exemption List:

1. Hazardous waste in household/domestic waste
2. Infectious waste
3. Sharps waste
4. Pathological waste (except human organs)
5. Waste mineral oil and mineral-containing oil produced through the pretreatment, either on ship or in port supporting facilities, of ship oily wastewater or residual oil and that need to be transported by ship
6. Scrap metal from hazardous waste incineration
7. Chromium-containing leather scrap (excluding tanning stage leather scrap and leftovers produced through trimming and shaving)
8. Chromium residue waste
9. Undamaged waste lead-acid batteries
10. Cyanide tailings produced through gold cyanidation
11. Waste acid with corrosive hazard characteristics only
12. Waste alkali with corrosive hazardous characteristics only
13. Aluminum ash and secondary aluminum ash waste
14. Discarded oily rags and worker protection supplies
15. Leaded glass in cathode ray tubes
16. Discarded circuit boards
17. Vanadium-titanium catalyst waste produced in the process of flue gas denitration
18. Spent catalyst from catalytic cracking
19. Spent catalyst from exhaust catalytic converters in motor vehicles and non-road mobile machinery
20. Hazardous wastes that are not included in this Hazardous Waste Exemption Management List or whose use does not meet the exemption conditions listed in this Hazardous Waste Exemption Management List

RISKS TO AEROSPACE AND DEFENSE

Enforcement due to improper management of hazardous wastes by local authorities, which can lead to unexpected costs and damage the company’s reputation.

IAEG ACTIONS RELATED TO THIS RISK

Notify IAEG members of the regulation through this Alert.

USEFUL LINKS

Ministry of Ecological Environment (MEE) Homepage (in Chinese):

<http://www.mee.gov.cn/>

MEE Order 15 Notice (in Chinese):

http://www.mee.gov.cn/xgk2018/xgk/xgk02/202011/t20201127_810202.html

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