



OXO-BIODEGRADABLE PLASTICS ASSOCIATION

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UAE LEGISLATION

The Emirates Authority for Standardisation & Metrology (ESMA) is accepting only oxo-biodegradable plastic. The Notice to Factories issued in October 2011 requires compliance with UAE standard 5009-2009 which is a “Standard & Specification for Oxo-biodegradation of Plastic bags and other disposable Plastic objects.” They are not therefore accepting hydro-biodegradable plastics of any kind.

This will have a major impact on companies everywhere in the world who are supplying disposable plastic products and packaging into the UAE. As companies will not wish to have separate production-runs for goods and packaging which might end up in the UAE they would be well advised to convert all their production to d₂w to avoid confiscation at the docks and fines.

Para 2.1 of the EMIRATES CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT SCHEME of 31.12.09 applies not just to bags but to “all oxo-biodegradable bags, packaging and disposable articles made from plastic polymers derived from fossil-fuels. These are essentially but not limited to, flexible shopping bags and semi-rigid plastic packaging for food, magazines, consumer-durables, garbage bags, bin-liners for household use, shrink-wrap, pallet-wrap, cling film etc and other articles normally used over short periods and subsequently discarded.”

Para. 3 makes compliance with UAE Standard 5009-2009 mandatory, so they must all be oxo-biodegradable.

However, The Notice to Factories issued in October 2011 relates only to “plastic bags” so the prohibition is currently being applied only to plastic bags. This would include any type of plastic bag e.g. shopping bags, bin liners, garbage bags, food bags etc.

It is understood that the prohibition will be progressively extended during 2012 so that other disposable plastic products as well as plastic bags will all be banned by 1st January 2013 in accordance with para 2 of the Decree dated 12.4.2009, unless they are oxo-biodegradable.