



European Welding Association

EU Regulation REACH, Guidance on information requirements and chemical safety assessment.

Introduction

Under the EU Regulation REACH each manufacturer and importer of substances will communicate an exposure scenario, covering the life cycle of the substance. Substances are widely used in the manufacture of welding consumables.

In cooperation with EUROFER, EWA contributed in a publication of a **welding exposure scenario** which is intended to form a part of REACH registration documentations.

Recommendations for Exposure Scenarios, Risk Management Measures and to identify Operational Conditions under which metals, alloys and metallic articles may be safely welded

Welding/Brazing produces fumes which can affect human health and the environment. Fumes are a varying mixture of airborne gases and fine particles which, if inhaled or swallowed, constitute a health hazard. The degree of risk will depend on the composition of the fume, concentration of the fume and duration of exposure. The fume composition is dependent upon the material being worked, the process and consumables being used, coatings on the work such as paint, galvanizing or plating, oil or contaminants from cleaning and degreasing activities. A systematic approach to the assessment of exposure is necessary, taking into account the particular circumstances for the operator and ancillary worker that can be exposed.

Considering the emission of fumes when welding, brazing or cutting of metals, it is recommended to (1) arrange risk management measures through applying general information and guidelines provided by this exposure scenario and (2) using the information provided by the Safety Data Sheet, issued in accordance with REACH, by the welding consumable manufacturer.

The employer shall ensure that the risk from welding fumes to the safety and health of workers is eliminated or reduced to a minimum. The following principle shall be applied:

- 1- Select the applicable process/material combinations with the lowest class, whenever possible.
- 2- Set welding process with the lowest emission parameter.
- 3- Apply the relevant collective protective measure in accordance with class number. In general, the use of PPE is taken into account after all other measures is applied.
- 4- Wear the relevant personal protective equipment in accordance with the duty cycle.

In addition, compliance with the National Regulations regarding the exposure to welding fumes of welders and related personnel shall be verified.

In the table "Risk Management Measures for individual process / material combinations" below, reference is made to the following standards for collective and personal protection measures:

ISO 4063	Welding process Reference Numbers according to ISO 4063
EN ISO 15012-1:2004	Health and safety in welding and allied processes - Requirements testing and marking of equipment or air filtration - Part 1: Testing of the separation efficiency for welding fume
EN ISO 15012-2:2008	Health and safety in welding and allied processes - Requirements, testing and marking of equipment for air filtration - Part 2: Determination of the minimum air volume flow rate of captor hoods and nozzles
EN 149:2001	Respiratory protective devices - Filtering half masks to protect against particles - Requirements, testing, marking (FFP1 - FFP2 - FFP3)
EN 1835:2000	Respiratory protective devices. Light duty construction compressed air line breathing apparatus incorporating a helmet or a hood. Requirements, testing, marking (LDH1 - LDH2 - LDH3).
EN 12941:1998	Respiratory protective devices. Powered filtering devices incorporating a helmet or a hood. Requirements, testing, marking (TH1 - TH2 - TH3).
EN 143:2000	Respiratory protective devices — Particle filters — Requirements, testing, marking (P1, P2, P3)
Directive 1998/24/EC	Article 6.2 on the protection of the health and safety of workers from the risks related to chemical agents at work
BGR 190	Benutzung von Atemschutzgeräten (Berufsgenossenschaftliche Regel für Sicherheit und Gesundheit bei der Arbeit)
TRGS 528	Schweisstechnische Arbeiten (Technische Regeln für Gefahrstoffe)



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Also in the table "Risk Management Measures for individual process / material combinations", reference is made to footnotes.

The description of these footnotes:

- ¹ Class: approximate ranking to mitigate risk by selecting process/material combinations with the lowest value. Identified collective and individual risk management measures shall be applied
- ² Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) required avoiding exceeding the National Exposure Limit Value (DC: Duty cycle expressed on 8 hours)
- ³ General Ventilation (GV) Low. With additional Local Exhaust Ventilation (LEV) and extracted air to the outside, the GV or LEV capacity may be reduced to 1/5 of the original requirement.
- ⁴ General Ventilation (GV) Medium (double compared to Low)
- ⁵ Filtrating half mask (FFP2)
- ⁶ When an alloyed consumable is used, measures from "Class V" are required
- ⁷ General Ventilation (GV) Low. When no Local Exhaust Ventilation, the ventilation requirement is 5-fold
- ⁸ Filtrating half mask (FFP3), helmet with powered filters (TH2/P2), or helmet with external air supply (LDH2)
- ⁹ Reduced (negative) pressured Area: A separate, ventilated area where reduced (negative) pressure, compared to the surrounded area, is maintained
- ¹⁰ Local Exhaust Ventilation (LEV) High, extraction at source (includes table, hood, arm or torch extraction)
- ¹¹ Helmet with powered filters (TH3/P3), or helmet with external air supply (LDH3)
- ¹² Local Exhaust Ventilation (LEV) Low, extraction at source (includes table, hood, arm or torch extraction)
- ¹³ Local Exhaust Ventilation (LEV) Medium, extraction at source (includes table, hood, arm or torch extraction)
- ¹⁴ Recommended measures to comply with national maximum allowable limits. Extracted fumes, for all materials except unalloyed steel and aluminium, shall be filtered before release in the outside environment.
- ¹⁵ A confined space, despite its name, is not necessarily small. Examples of confined spaces include ship, silos, vats, utility vaults, tanks, etc.
- ¹⁶ Improved helmet, designed to avoid direct flow of welding fumes inside
- n.a. Not applicable
- n.r. Not recommended



Risk Management Measures for individual process / base material combinations

Class	Process (according to ISO 4063)	Base Materials	Remarks	Ventilation / Extraction / Filtration ¹⁴	PPE ² DC<15%	PPE ² DC>15%
Non-confined space¹⁵						
I	GTAW 141	All	Except Aluminium	GV low ³	n.r.	n.r.
	SAW 12					
	Autogeneous 3					
	PAW 15					
	ESW/EGW 72/73					
	Resistance 2					
	Stud welding 78					
	Solid state 521					
Gases Brazing 9	All	Except Cd- alloys	GV low ³	n.r.	n.r.	
II	GTAW 141	Aluminium	n.a.	GV medium ⁴	n.a.	FFP2 ⁵
III	MMAW 111	All	Except Be-, V-, Mn-, Ni- alloys and Stainless ⁶	GV low ⁷ LEV low ¹²	Improved helmet ¹⁶	FFP2 ⁵
	FCAW 136/137	All	Except Stainless and Ni- alloys ⁶			
	GMAW 131/135	All	Except Cu-, Be-, V- alloys ⁶			
	Powder Plasma Arc 152	All	Except Be-, V-, Cu-, Mn-, Ni-alloys and Stainless ⁶			
IV	All processes class I	Painted / primed / oiled	No Pb containing primer	GV low ³	FFP2 ⁵	FFP3, TH2/P2, or LDH2 ⁸
	All processes class III	Painted / primed / oiled	No Pb containing primer	GV low ⁷ LEV low ¹²		
V	MMAW 111	Stainless, Ni-, Be-, and V- alloys	n.a.	LEV low ¹²	TH3/P3, LDH3 ¹¹	TH3/P3, LDH3 ¹¹
	FCAW 136/137	Stainless, Mn- and Ni- alloys				
	GMAW 131	Cu-alloys				
	Powder Plasma Arc 152	Stainless, Mn-, Ni-, and Cu- alloys				
VI	GMAW 131	Be-, and V- alloys	n.a.	Underpressured area ⁹ LEV low ¹²	TH3/P3, LDH3 ¹¹	TH3/P3, LDH3 ¹¹
	Powder Plasma Arc 152					
VII	Self shielded FCAW 114	Un-, high alloyed steel	Cored wire, not containing Ba	Underpressured area ⁹ LEV medium ¹³	TH3/P3, LDH3 ¹¹	TH3/P3, LDH3 ¹¹
	Self shielded FCAW 114	Un-, high alloyed steel	Cored wire, containing Ba			
	All	Painted / primed	Paint / Primer containing Pb			
	Arc Gouging and Cutting 8	All	n.a.			
	Gases Brazing 9	Cd- alloys	n.a.			
Closed system or Confined space¹⁵						
I	Laser 52	All	Closed system	GV medium ⁴	n.a.	n.a.
	Electron Beam 51					
VIII	All	All	Confined space	LEV high ¹⁰ External air supply	LDH3 ¹¹	LDH3 ¹¹