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【For inquiries】

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To the Press,

(The original text in Japanese)

Conclusion of the Labour Policy Council on “Revision of the Enforcement Order of the Industrial Safety and Health Act”

～To regulate 1,2-dichloropropane as a specified chemical substance～

The Industrial Health and Safety Subcommittee of the Labour Policy Council (chaired by Professor Ritsu Dobashi, Graduate School of Information Science and Technology, University of Tokyo) deliberated on and reported to the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare on July 30, 2013 that the draft outlines of the cabinet order and ordinance that revised the Enforcement Order of the Industrial Safety and Health Act and related ordinances were appropriate. The Minister had consulted the draft outlines to The Labour Policy Council (chaired by Professor Yoshio Higuchi, Dean of the Faculty of Business and Commerce, Keio University) on July 26, 2013.

The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare will proceed to revise the cabinet order and related ordinances based on the report of the Subcommittee (the finalized order and ordinance will be promulgated in August 2013 and enforced on October 1 2013).

【The key issues of the draft cabinet order and ordinance】

Based on the results of the national risk assessment/management scheme carried out in relation to the prevention of health impairments in workers, 1,2-dichloropropane is added as a carcinogen specified in the Ordinance on Prevention of Hazards Due to Specified Chemical Substances. The substance has been recognised as one of the suspected causative agents of biliary tract cancer reported since March 2013.

With this revision of the ordinance, when carrying out degreasing, cleaning, etc. using 1,2-dichloropropane, employers are required, among others, to install local exhaust ventilation systems, measure the concentration of solvent vapours at workplaces, conduct initial and periodical medical examinations, appoint chief workers who oversee the relevant work, and keep records of the tasks concerned for a period of 30 years.

* In addition, the Industrial Health and Safety Subcommittee has started discussing issues, such as, appropriate hazards control of chemical substances, including those not regulated by the Ordinance on Prevention of Hazards Due to Specified Chemical Substances, based on their individual toxicity and exposure, in accordance with the 12th Industrial Accident Prevention Plan.