



INFORMATION

Bulletin

Canadian Association of Chemical Distributors

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Responsible Distribution ®

On November 8th, 1990 the members of the Canadian Association of Chemical Distributors (CACD) made a landmark decision with regards to the Responsible Distribution of chemicals in Canada. By unanimous agreement the 37 members of CACD adopted a ***Responsible Distribution Policy*** and a ***Distributors Code of Practice***. Adherence to this Code became an absolute condition of membership of the CACD. The 37 members had three years to put into effect the various policies and procedures to address the different elements of the code and to be in compliance. Today, new members are allowed a period of three years after joining the CACD to adhere compliance.

At that same time, the Board of Directors of the CACD adopted a ***Mission Statement*** for the association, to:

SPEAK with one voice for the industry, reflecting the collective views of its members in dealing with governments, allied associations and the public.

PROVIDE its members with services which assist them in the conduct of their business.

ENSURE adherence by its members to a Code of Practice for Responsible Distribution

and, in so doing, support a professional and ethical industry

It was the intent of the CACD that these important decision would contribute greatly to a safer and more responsible chemical distribution industry in Canada, and that they would demonstrate the responsibility of CACD members to their customers, to their suppliers, to the public and toward the environment.

The mandatory ***Statement of Commitment***, agreed to by all members, says that:

"The CACD and each of its member companies is committed to taking every practical precaution towards ensuring that products and services do not represent an unacceptable level of risk to its employees, customers, the public, or the environment"

This general commitment is developed and strengthened by eight **Guiding Principles** which stipulate that CACD members shall:

- i) distribute chemicals, chemical products and provide services in a manner which protects people and the environment
- ii) provide information about the hazards and associated risks of chemicals , chemical products and services to customers, enabling them to use and dispose of these chemicals and chemical products in a responsible manner
- iii) provide information about the hazards and associated risks of distribution activities to employees, contractors, transporters, visitors, sub-distributors and resellers, interested members of the community and emergency first responders
- iv) make Responsible Distribution an early and integral part of the planning process leading to the introduction of new products.
- v) apply this code to existing modified and new chemicals, chemicals products, services and facilities
- vi) comply with all legal requirements which affect its operations and products
- vii) be responsible and sensitive to community concerns.
- viii) require, with due diligence, that sub-distributors meet the standard of this code of practice

The commitment and guiding principles are finally underpinned by a Code of Practice and various implementation Tools. These give each member company the detailed protocols to assist them to **achieve and to measure** compliance with Responsible Distribution requirements

The change in culture, which is sought by implementing this initiative can be summarized by the following descriptions of an **old ethic** and a **new ethic**:

OLD ETHIC	NEW ETHIC
do the minimum the law requires	do the right thing - exceed letter and spirit of the law

low profile	be seen to do the right thing
limit product obligations	life cycle stewardship
downplay public concern	seek and address public concerns
assumption of product or process "innocence"	precautionary approach
hazard information if necessary	public & employees have right to know all risks
defensive approach	lead in public policy process
every company for themselves	mutual aid & peer pressure
ignor or fight advocates	seek advocates' input
bottom line & laws only guide decisions	integrate all the above into decisions

As of December 31st, 1995 all current members of CACD due to be in compliance, based on self-assessments, were in compliance with Milestone 6 of Responsible Distribution ®, and all other members were on target to achieve compliance by their due dates. In addition, the members of CACD have given majority approval to a further proposal that "**Phase I Verification**", be conducted by a third party, not in the chemical distribution industry, and that process is now nearing completion. The second phase, involving on-site verification, is currently in the planning stage by CACD's Responsible Distribution ® Committee, for future presentation to the membership.

Responsible Distribution is a registered trademark of Canadian Association of Chemicals Distributors