



European  
Commission

# Major Accident Hazards

## from disasters to success

The use of large amounts of dangerous chemicals is unavoidable in some industry sectors which are vital for a modern industrialised society.

There are around **12 000 establishments** in the EU subject to the legislation on major accidents involving dangerous chemicals

*Major industrial accidents can cause death or injury to people and can harm the environment*



**60% of EU citizens** consider that biodiversity is threatened by man-made disasters such as industrial accidents



Major accidents cause **several billions of Euros of damage** every year



**77% of EU citizens** consider that **man-made disasters could have negative impacts on the economic situation** in their region

**To minimise the associated risks, measures are necessary to prevent major accidents and to ensure appropriate preparedness and response should such accidents nevertheless happen.**



Every year there are around **30 major accidents** in the EU

### EU policy makes your life safer

Since 1982 the so-called Seveso Directive (named after the catastrophic accident in the Italian town of Seveso) has provided EU wide rules on the prevention of major accidents and the limitation of their effects. It was last updated by Directive 2012/18/EU.

Considering the very high rate of industrialisation in the EU the Seveso Directive has contributed to achieving a low frequency of major accidents even

though the current Directive covers more establishments than ever. Fewer accidents with accidents and lower impacts also contribute to sustainable economic and green growth and avoid loss of jobs.

As there are around 30 major accidents in the EU each year continued efforts are necessary to prevent major accidents and to limit their impacts on people's health, the environment and the economy. EU action is also necessary because the impacts of major accidents do not stop at borders.

## Did you know?

EU legislation is widely considered as a benchmark for industrial safety policy and has influenced legislation in many countries world-wide.



## Establish rules

e.g. Legislation for establishments, inspection regimes and sharing of information

## Learn from information generated

e.g. Accident reporting and data analysis



## Limit risk

e.g. Identification and management of risks through safety measures and land-use planning

## Limit impact

e.g. Adoption and testing of emergency plans, communication of safety measures to the public



## Have your say!

If you live in an area potentially affected by a major accident involving dangerous substances, EU legislation requires that you are involved in the decision making, even if the establishment concerned is located in a neighbouring EU country.

You will be consulted when:

- new establishments are planned
- significant modifications are made to existing ones
- new developments are planned around existing establishments
- external emergency plans are drawn up for high risk establishments

Information on how you can protect yourself in case of an emergency needs to be made available by operators and the authorities.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Major accident hazards policy:

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/seveso>



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