Taking Chemicals Management to the Next Level — the Responsible Care Global Charter and the Global Product Strategy

Now in its third decade, Responsible Care is a key part of the global industry's contribution to the United Nations' Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM). With the development of the Responsible Care Global Charter and the Global Product Strategy, the world-wide chemical industry is answering stakeholder expectations for continuous performance improvement.

The Responsible Care Global Charter provides the vision for future development of the initiative. It establishes a broader and more vigorous agenda by focusing on new and important challenges facing the chemistry industry and society including sustainable development, effective management of chemicals along the value chain, greater industry transparency and increased global harmonization among Responsible Care programs in countries around the world.

The Global Product Strategy was developed to expand and coordinate industry's commitment to product stewardship and the safe use of chemicals throughout their life cycles. ICCA implements the Global Product Strategy through the Responsible Care initiative, to increase public and stakeholder awareness and confidence that chemicals in commerce are appropriately managed throughout their lifecycle. Responsible Care associations and their member companies are developing new, transparent ways to report on their continued efforts to improve product information and stewardship practices.

Across the Globe, Responsible Care Companies Share a Commitment to You

The chemical industry is one of the world's most vital business sectors. Its products provide solutions in areas such as healthcare, agriculture, clothing, construction, transport, leisure and many others. Today's chemical industry includes a new generation of companies committed to sustainable development, responsible product stewardship and open dialogue with their stakeholders. We are proud of our achievements toward securing our sustainable future. Through Responsible Care, companies continue to strive for innovative ways to achieve the vision of the World Summit on Sustainable Development that, by the year 2020: “All chemicals will be produced and used in ways that minimize risks for human health and the environment.”

Learn more at: www.icca-chem.org and www.responsiblecare.org
A Responsible Ethic Drives Sustainable Innovation

Responsible Care is the chemical industry’s global voluntary initiative under which companies, through their national associations, work to continuously improve their health, safety and environmental performance, and communicate with stakeholders about their products and processes. Responsible Care is the ethical underpinning that enables the creation of essential products that contribute to a sustainable tomorrow. These products and technologies support global efforts to reduce energy use, minimize greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and lighten the human footprint on our earth and its resources. This is Responsible Care.

The chemical industry seeks to live up to the high expectations of its stakeholders by demonstrating that it is a safe and responsible steward of its products, and the processes that create them. Responsible Care companies work with their customers and suppliers to extend their commitments to safety and stewardship throughout the chemistry value chain.

Responsible Care embodies the chemical industry’s commitment to raise its performance around the world. Working with the communities in which they do business, chemical companies are improving their performance while delivering the products that make life better. Responsible Care companies and associations share best practices and support their adoption worldwide. In this spirit, Responsible Care is expanding to emerging chemical economies including Eastern Europe, Russia, China, the Middle East and Africa.

The International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA) serves as the guardian of Responsible Care globally, monitoring its implementation and ensuring its integrity. Today, 53 chemical industry associations are active in Responsible Care.

A Commitment to Results

Responsible Care also means measurable performance, and today, companies around the globe have positive stories to tell. For example, in the European Union, Responsible Care companies have cut their energy intensity by 4.6% annually between 1990 and 2006. GHG emissions, meanwhile, fell by almost 30%. In the U.S., Responsible Care companies have reduced greenhouse gas intensity by 23% since 1992. In 2006, the Japanese chemical industry reduced their unit energy consumption to 82% of 1990 levels and Korean chemical companies saved 622,000 ton of oil equivalent (TOE) in 2006 compared with 1998 levels.

Verifying Responsible Business Practices

Through Responsible Care, companies commit to go beyond self-assessment and adopt performance verification processes by external parties. While some associations have introduced mandatory third party verification of company performance, others partner with governments to validate performance. In Malaysia in 2007, ICCA in conjunction with the Japanese Chemical Industry Council held a workshop to inspire expanded external performance verification within the Asian chemical industry.

Through Responsible Care, Chemical Companies are Committed to Openness and Dialogue

National Responsible Care managers collect and report to ICCA environment, health, safety, product stewardship and Responsible Care implementation data for their countries. Data is then shared with stakeholders, an important element in the industry’s commitment to measurably demonstrate progress in its chemical management activities and ensure the integrity of the Responsible Care initiative worldwide.

View performance data at www.icca-chem.org and www.responsiblecare.org

Global Progress Made Possible by Top-down Commitment and Industry-wide Execution

The proven practices of Responsible Care begin with a top-level commitment from every company CEO and extend out to employees, communities, and to partners in other industries, government and global business communities. CEOs pledge to adhere to Guiding Principles and their visible support of the Responsible Care initiative is expected to be evident within their companies and felt by employees.

As part of their obligations under Responsible Care, companies commit to an enhanced, transparent and effective global governance process to ensure accountability in the collective implementation of Responsible Care. This strong governance process is implemented through ICCA and incorporates such issues as tracking and communicating performance commitments; defining and monitoring the implementation of Responsible Care obligations; supporting national association governance; helping companies and associations to achieve Charter commitments; and establishing a global process for revoking, if necessary, the Responsible Care status of any company or association that fails to meet its commitments.

The global Responsible Care initiative is “an inspiring model of self-regulation that other industries should consider following.”

— Former UN Secretary General Kofi Anan