

# **OECD PROGRAMME ON CHEMICAL ACCIDENTS**

***(WORKING PARTY ON CHEMICAL ACCIDENTS)***

IOMC Webinar on Chemical Accidents Prevention, Preparedness and Response,  
28 April 2021

## » Objective of the OECD Programme on Chemical Accidents

**Share experience and recommend appropriate policy options for enhancing the prevention of, preparedness for, and response to, chemical accidents.**

Programme of work designed to:

- support cooperation and knowledge exchange on chemical accidents;
- discuss and provide recommendations on continuing and emerging issues;
- have a particular emphasis on **PREVENTION**. As a manmade risk, chemical accidents are preventable; sometimes easily preventable if past lessons are shared and implemented.

## » Why an OECD programme on Chemical Accidents? (1)

- Major accidents continue to happen worldwide;
- Over the past decades, successive major accidents, have caused **deaths**, **injuries**, significant **environmental pollution** and massive **economic losses**;
  - ✓ Beirut, Lebanon (2020),
  - ✓ The Bento dam, Brazil (2015),
  - ✓ Tianjin, China (2015),
  - ✓ West, Texas, United States (2013),
  - ✓ Gumi, Korea (2013).
- Recovering from industrial accidents sets back development gains, takes time and is expensive.



## Why an OECD programme on Chemical Accidents? (2)

According to UNEP Global Chemical Outlook II, chemicals production has been soaring in the last decade:

- The size of the global chemical industry exceeded US dollars 5 trillion in 2017, and is expected to **double by 2030**;
- The **dependence on chemicals** for technological progress, incl. for new energy sources, is **increasing**; and many substances necessary for implementing new technologies are hazardous;
- A sustainable industrial development cannot be achieved without the establishment of ***strong programmes for chemical accidents prevention, preparedness and response.***

## » Work areas of the OECD Chemical Accident Programme (1)

### Provide a forum for countries and stakeholders to support collaboration and knowledge exchange on chemical accidents

- **Cooperation and knowledge sharing** helps us to face common problems and emerging issues together;
- **Learning from each other's experiences** and raising the level of risk governance in all countries through these exchanges;
- WPCA plenary meeting once per year.

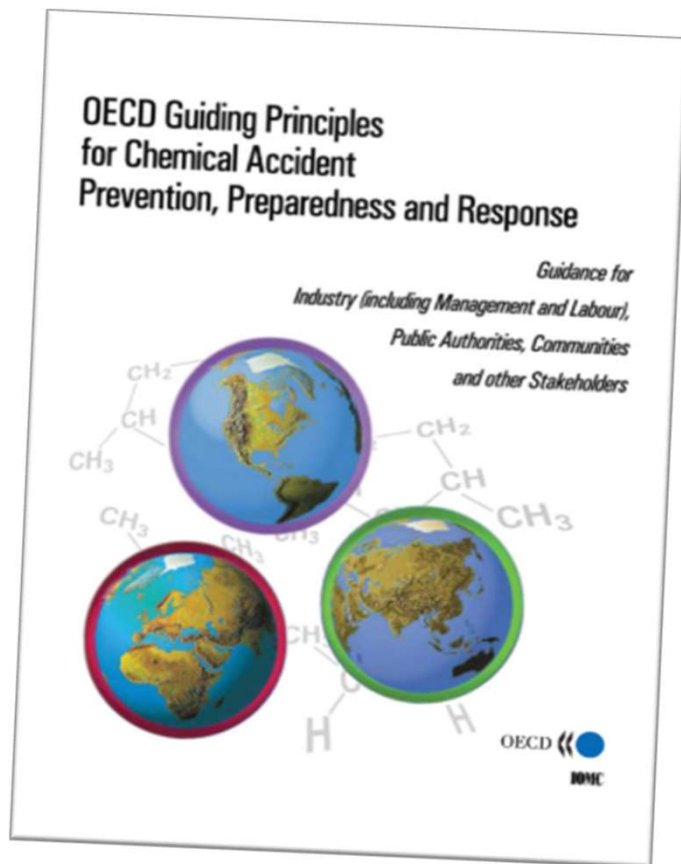
## » Work areas of the OECD Chemical Accident Programme (2)

### Provide guidance and analyse emerging risks

- Keeping up with **emerging issues**, helps us to learn new lessons quickly and apply "old" lessons to new areas, in order to prevent chemical accidents;
- Beside emerging issues, many accidents result from known factors that need to be reminded.

# Revision of the OECD Guiding Principles for Chemical Accidents Prevention, Preparedness and Response

- Provide guidance, applicable worldwide, to support stakeholders in taking appropriate actions to prevent chemical accidents and to mitigate their adverse effects if they nevertheless occur.



- ✓ Third revised Edition aims to public authorities, industry and other stakeholders;
- ✓ Help ensure that chemical accidents programmes takes account of latest good practices and advances in the field of prevention, preparedness, response, and assessment of consequences;
- ✓ Often accidents happen with similar causes that could have been prevented with “just” having the basis of process safety in place. These revised Guiding Principles will also serve as a reminder of these key elements.
- ✓ Publication planned for mid-2022.



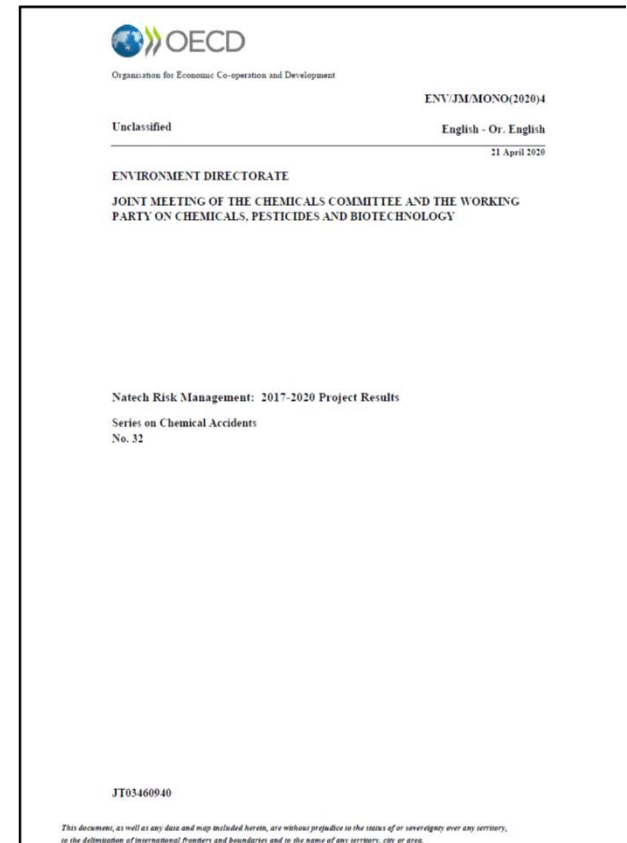
# Examples of Guidance

## Corporate Governance for Process Safety



## Change of Ownership in Hazardous Facilities

## Natech





## » Natech - Natural Hazards triggering Technological Accidents

‘Natech’ relate to **accidents caused by a natural hazard** such as earthquake, flood (...), which involves the release of hazardous substances, fires or explosions. Many past Natech have caused major damage to hazardous installations.

Linked to **climate change**, frequency + intensity of natural hazards will increase in the next decades; and some Natech may occur at new locations.

- OECD Natech project initiated in 2008 - In cooperation with EC Joint Research Center, UNEP/OCHA Joint Environment Unit, UNECE; Goals:
  - Investigate Natech specificities for prevention, preparedness and response to chemical accidents,
  - Exchange experience across countries, and provide guidance.

Developing a **brochure to raise awareness on Natech Risks** (2021) and a **Guidance on Natech Risk Management** (2024).

<https://www.oecd.org/chemicalsafety/chemical-accidents/risks-from-natural-hazards-at-hazardous-installations.htm>



## OECD Legal Instruments on Chemical Accidents

- Recommendation concerning **Chemical Accident Prevention, Preparedness and Response** (2003) [OECD/LEGAL/0319](#);
- Recommendation concerning the Application of the **Polluter-Pays Principle** to Accidental Pollution (1989) [OECD/LEGAL/0251](#);
- Decision-Recommendation concerning Provision of **Information to the Public and Public Participation** in Decision-making Processes related to the Prevention of, and Response to, Accidents Involving Hazardous Substances (1988) [OECD/LEGAL/0239](#);
- Decision on the Exchange of Information concerning Accidents Capable of Causing **Transfrontier Damage** (1988) [OECD/LEGAL/0240](#).

**Now being updated!**

<https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/en/>

## » Collaboration with Partner Agencies – Inter-Agency Group on Industrial/Chemical Accidents



Brings together international organisations and institutions working on prevention of, preparedness for and response to industrial and chemical accidents. It aims to:

- Strengthen international cooperation;
- Improve the use of resources and avoid potential duplication of work;
- Facilitate understanding and coordination of each agency's programme;
- Carry a common message to the international community.

[Brochure available online](#)



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