

Animal welfare at Evonik

Animal tests and alternatives



Introduction

Evonik bears tremendous responsibility for the safety and quality of its products throughout the entire product life cycle (“from cradle to grave”) and for protecting people and the environment. The ability to assess product safety requires toxicological and ecotoxicological data, and, in many instances, animal tests remain the only reliable source of these data from a scientific perspective. In addition, the corresponding laws at both a national and international level require manufacturers to perform animal tests. Evonik actively supports the development of alternatives to animal tests in order to continue reducing the number of animal tests performed now and to completely eliminate them in the future. Evonik is guided by the 3R concept*:
Reduce – Refine – Replace

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Evonik. Power to create.

In its commitment to this guiding principle, Evonik has formulated the following guidelines:

1. Animal tests shall only ever be commissioned when mandated by binding national or international law or when unusual circumstances make such tests absolutely necessary for meeting our responsibilities to human beings and to the environment.
2. Before animal tests can be commissioned for required toxicological assessments, Evonik shall determine whether published data are already available and, if so, shall rely on these where possible.
3. Before commissioning animal tests, Evonik shall explore and make use of any legal and scientifically defensible options for exposure-based waiving.
4. Where possible, toxicological studies are to be initiated in cooperation with other manufacturers (e.g., consortia) in order to minimize the number of animal tests.
5. If appropriate, Evonik shall also use other methods for assessing material properties on the basis of existing data for similar materials. Examples of these methods include read-across, grouping and weight-of-evidence approaches.
6. Suitable, valid in vitro test systems are to be used in cases where these methods are applicable.
7. Evonik shall pursue and support the development of in silico systems (such as SAR/QSAR) for predicting the toxicological, ecotoxicological, physical and chemical properties of materials. Available systems are to be used wherever possible, suitable and recognized.
8. Evonik shall support and provide manpower and financial assistance to national and international institutions (such as the EPAA, the SET Foundation, etc.) developing alternative experimental methods. Evonik shall also advocate validating these methods and lobby authorizing bodies to accept the results of these tests.
9. Evonik shall employ an animal welfare officer with Group-wide authority, whose tasks include, among others, conducting random assessments of toxicological testing plans, auditing the laboratories that Evonik contracts, and providing product safety units with independent information on new alternative methods and on the regulatory status of those methods.
10. Only employees with an appropriate scientific educational background shall be permitted to perform or award contracts for animal tests.

**The 3R concept was developed by English researchers William Rex Burch and Rex Burch in 1959. Their aim was to foster a humane relationship between human beings and animals.*