

Elastomer Guideline – drinking water – KTW - FAQ

What is the „KTW guideline” or „KTW recommendation“?

Until now the KTW guideline (part 1.3.13) of the Federal Environmental Agency (UBA) has laid down the rules for testing and certifying the safety of gasket materials used for drinking water. It was called KTW approval (KTW = Kunststoffe im Trinkwasser – plastics in drinking water) according to the „KTW recommendation“. The examination was carried out on the basis of a positive list (raw materials, elastomers, cross-linking chemicals and fibers) with subsequent laboratory examinations (sensory and chemical analysis).

Is the KTW guideline still valid?

No, it is not. The KTW guideline has been withdrawn by 31 December 2011. The maximum validity of the certificates which have been issued according to the KTW guideline is five years. That means that the last KTW approval expires on 31 December 2016 at the latest.

The reason is that the KTW guideline is not considered any more to guarantee the hygienic safety sufficiently.

Does the Elastomer Guideline replace the KTW guideline?

Yes, the Elastomer Guideline of 22 December 2011 replaces the KTW guideline (part 1.3.13). The test criteria/parameters have been significantly tightened in order to ensure that the hygienic requirements will be met.

From which date the approvals must be according the new Elastomer Guideline?

After 31 December 2011 all materials, for which an approval is applied, must fulfil the requirements of the new Elastomer Guideline.

How are the lists of substances structured in the Elastomer Guideline?

The guideline comprises three different lists of substances:

List 1 contains all raw materials tested and classified as harmless by the Federal Environmental Agency (UBA).

List 2 contains all restricted raw materials which still may be used until 31 December 2021. They are restricted, because they have not been submitted to the UBA for examination yet or they have not yet been successfully tested.

List 3 states all approved types of elastomers, as e.g. NR, SBR and NBR.

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Why the tests according to the Elastomer Guideline are much more demanding than previously?

The lists of all permitted raw materials and rubber chemicals have been restricted significantly. Additionally the necessary laboratory examinations have been considerably tightened and extended.

How can be managed to get raw materials from list 2 to list 1?

Only the manufacturer of those raw materials is authorized to apply for their examination at the UAB. In case of a positive evaluation, the raw material will be entered into list 1.

Is NBR allowed to be used as binder?

Yes, according to list 3 NBR may be used without any restrictions.

Are aramid fibers permitted for use?

Yes, they are. Nevertheless for the time being this permission is only valid until 31 December 2021.

How can be distinguished between “old” and “new” approvals?

The drinking water approval according to the KTW guideline is mostly called „KTW“.

An approval according to the new Elastomer Guideline is described with the designation „**drinking water according to the Elastomer Guideline („KTW“)**“ or similarly.

Application engineering questions?

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