

Ethical and Environmental Awareness Policy

Utexbel – Ethical and Environmental Awareness Policy

Introduction

As an integrated textile company from fiber to fabric, Utexbel wants to promote sustainable development by focussing on following issues:

Ensuring the consumers' health by producing environmental friendly textile products, a.o.

- ◆ Based on man-made fibers with certified origin and Oekotex label.
- ◆ Based on FLO-certified cotton fibers (Fairtrade Labelling Organization).
- ◆ Based on organic cotton products.
- ◆ Based on REACH registered dyestuffs and chemicals.

Protecting the environment by preserving the natural resources

- ◆ By investing in energy-saving processes (electricity, steam, gas, water).
- ◆ By investing in water management systems.
- ◆ By limiting and selecting the different kinds of waste.
- ◆ By improving transport organization.

Focussing on a transparent and traceable supply chain

- ◆ By working with certified suppliers and partners.
- ◆ By managing ourselves the spinning, weaving, dyeing and finishing processes.

Ensuring a safe and clean working environment for all involved workers

- ◆ By training and motivating people in environmental issues.
- ◆ By investing in new safe machinery and equipment that is more comfortable to work with.

It is important to know that Utexbel, as an industrial partner, still believes in the know-how of its people and its own process management. This enables Utexbel to provide competitive and ethical solutions to its customers, a view that enables longterm relationships, which are constantly improved.

Environmental Friendly fabrics

Use of selected cotton origins

The Utexbel environmental awareness programme can provide fabrics with

FLO certified cotton fibers (Fair Trade)

Organic cotton fibers

Utexbel is also a certified supplier for "Max Havelaar" labelled companies

Use of certified man-made fibers

Utexbel uses only fibers from the major European fiber producers, e.g.

Lenzing Viscose and Lyocell Tencel

Tergal and Trevira Polyester

Aramid fibers from Kermel

Elastic fibres from Dow and Invista

All these fibers are Oekotex certified.

Use of approved dyestuffs and chemicals

The Utebel dyeing and finishing departments are key partners for the major European dyestuffs and chemicals suppliers. Utebel uses chemicals approved by the REACH regulations.

Oekotex certified fabrics

Most of the Utebel fabrics are Oekotex certified, which means that they are harmless for the uses they have been designed for.

Innovative fabrics

Utebel PPE-fabrics are designed and tailor-made to provide protective solutions to its customers. Many fabrics comply with the most stringent European standards for protective equipment.

Preservation of natural resources

Natural resources are becoming scarce. A well-considered use of them is one of the main issues for Utebel.

- ◆ Utebel is member of Val-I-Pack, which ensures a controlled management and re-use of packing waste.

Since 2007, Utebel has an environmental exploitation permit according to the latest IPPC standards (European Integrated Prevention and Pollution Control).

Utebel complies with the Flemish environmental regulations (VLAREM) concerning the management of wastewaters and the selective disposal of waste.

Following investments have been realized:

- ◆ Upgrading of storage tanks for chemicals and fuel.
- ◆ Neutralizing installation for wastewaters working on CO₂ instead of acids.
- ◆ Investment in an installation to improve biological water clearance.

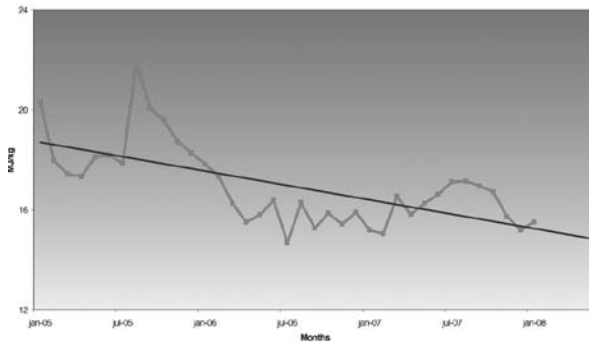
Monitoring of different kinds of emissions and measures to limit them

- ◆ Emissions of steam generators.
- ◆ Process related odour emissions.
- ◆ Sound emissions and investment in dampers and mufflers.

Efforts are constantly being made to reduce energy consumption of the various textile processes, thus reducing CO₂ emissions to get below the Kyoto objectives.

In practice, this is achieved by

- ◆ Monitoring the energy consumption of the most important processes.
- ◆ Investment in energy efficient pumps and vents.
- ◆ Optimisation of heat exchangers.
- ◆ Investment in sensor driven lighting.



This allowed us to reduce the specific energy-consumption by 20 % over the last three years.

Utexbel only uses 100% green power.

Traceable supply chain

As an integrated spinner, weaver, dyer and finisher with production facilities in Belgium and France, Utexbel perfectly manages the production process of its fabrics.

Utexbel works together with European man-made fiber producers, which enables a perfect traceability towards fiber origin.

Suppliers and subcontractors are also evaluated on the fair trade ethical issues.

Safe and clean working conditions

Utexbel complies with the national social laws agreed between employees, unions and employers.

No discrimination of persons is allowed in any issue whatsoever, e.g.

- ◆ Equal pay for men and women performing the same function.
- ◆ No racial or religious prejudice in hiring policy.

The working environment is adapted to the activities that have to be performed and suitable protection equipment is used to prevent accidents.

Special measures have been taken to improve fire safety:

- ◆ General smoking prohibition in all production facilities.
- ◆ Installation of sprinkler installations with CO₂.
- ◆ Training of internal fire brigades per production facility.
- ◆ Installation of gas detection systems.

Training of the employees is provided to enable them to perform their job in the best possible conditions.

New employees are tutored by experienced colleagues to enable a rapid integration in the Utexbel-team.

Utexbel is certified ISO 9001. This is a guarantee for a permanent improvement of the organisation and the well being of the people working in it.

Implemented innovative ideas coming from the work-floor are stimulated by means of a financial reward.



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