

# Keeping AHPs safe

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As absorbent hygiene products come under increased scrutiny EDANA's Regulatory Affairs Manager, Nadine Galonde caught up with Amanda Rosen an Inspector with the Swedish Chemicals Agency (KEMI)

**Nadine Galonde:** You will present at [OUTLOOK](#) on hazardous chemical substances in feminine hygiene products. A recent KEMI report concludes that these products do not pose any health risk for consumers. However, are there further steps producers should take to ensure this remains the case?

Amanda Rosen: Our survey doesn't give us reason to believe that we should be worried about hazardous substances in feminine hygiene products, that's true. We found hazardous substances in the products that we investigated, but in low concentrations, and the general risk assessment that we made indicates that the risk to health from using these products is low. It appears as if the industry has the chemicals issue under control, which is pleasing.

On the other hand – we found 21 hazardous substances in the products, and some of them are in the International Chemical Secretariats (ChemSec) database over hazardous chemicals (the SIN-list) or on the European Chemicals Agency's (ECHA) substance evaluation list. Responsible use of chemical substances is connected to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 12<sup>[1]</sup> on sustainable consumption and production patterns. The producers should be aware of the presence of these substances and work to substitute them or eliminate them from the production process.

Furthermore, our study does not give any clues to the cause of the reactions that consumers have experienced when using scented products or products with "odour control". Perhaps another analytical method would have detected substances that we missed. When it comes to scents and "odour control" functions, the industry has an obligation to avoid additives that might do more harm than good.

**NG:** Where do you stand on the labelling of components in these products? Will it promote informed consumer choice? Or might it confuse and possibly unnecessarily scare the public?

AR: Personally, I am not sure that information about chemical components will be of much use to the consumers in their choices. It would also, in a way, mean handing over a responsibility that belongs to the producers – to make sure that products and articles that they put on the EU market are safe. Clear information about scents and "odour control" functions, however, is very valuable to consumers who want to avoid such products due to skin sensitivity or other reasons.

